

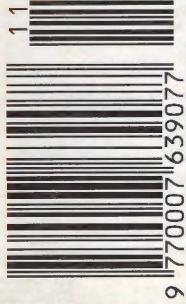
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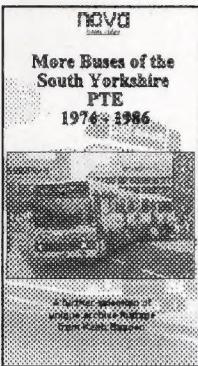
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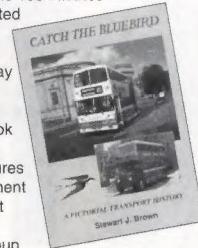
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ALAN MILLAR

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Cover:
First Glasgow's Leyland Atlanteans seem finally to have come to an end. LA1144 heads along Springburn Road in 1984.
ALAN MILLAR

VOLUME 50
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Worcester's pioneering Mercedes 608Ds have at last been replaced by an all-new fleet

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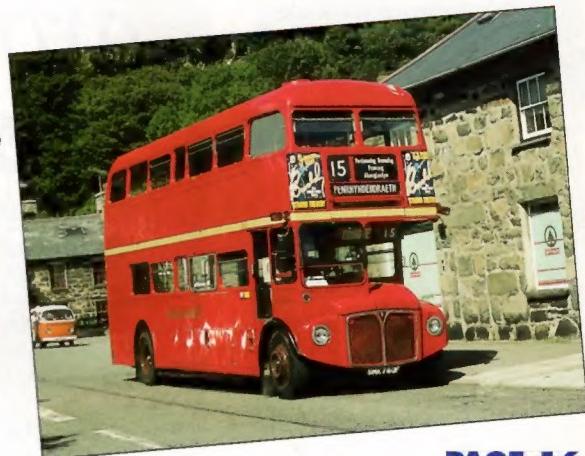
John G. Lidstone

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IRELAND 56

G. Irvine Millar and John A. Doherty



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RML2760 on the 15 — in an unfamiliar setting!

JOHN YOUNG



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New World First Bus — the new name in Hong Kong.

DONALD MACRAE

*I*t doesn't seem all that many years ago that the concepts of providing bus services and making a profit were entirely at odds with each other. It had long been accepted wisdom that you couldn't make a profit out of running bus services, and the few independent operators which managed to do it were the exception that proved the rule.

We've moved a long way since those not very distant days. In some respects it was a wisdom which needed to be shattered. It couldn't be right to expect local authorities to carry on subsidising routes which carried no-one to places they didn't want to go just because buses had run there since the 1920s. Similarly deregulation helped operators to think of routes they could run, where people wanted to go and couldn't. It's now often considered that buses were run inefficiently then, although that case is often overstated. Today's efficiency is often at the expense of drivers' wages and conditions (on the odd occasions the editor gets to drive a bus in service he realises he wouldn't consider it as a job at less than £20 an hour!) and of adequate on-the-road supervision and back-up.

Have the tables been turned too far? The industry has been pretty fortunate to avoid accusations of 'fat cats', which is probably, like so many things, down to the fact that influential people, people 'with a voice', don't go by bus. Passenger decline may have slowed, but overall passenger numbers are still falling, in many places fares levels are astronomic (on our local services fares per mile are more expensive than going by Concorde, and we never get caviar for breakfast!), drivers are still paid too little and yet there are a handful of people who are getting obscenely rich out of bus services.

Having gone from a stage where buses weren't expected to make a profit, now the big groups have very stringent profit targets; around 18% is considered the norm. We have heard in recent months of at least two managers departing from companies because of their conviction that while they can run profitably, they can't make those sort of returns. One left of his own accord, the other less so. Can bus services ever be comprehensive and affordable if shareholders expect to be able to take that sort of margin? And if not, how will they ever make the sort of contribution to reducing car dependency that Mr Prescott thinks they should — and which many of us know they must before this entire country comes to a shuddering halt in a fug of exhaust fumes?

STEPHEN MORRIS

THE MONTH'S CURRENT ISSUES

around the industry

MAYFLOWER LOOKS SET TO GET DENNIS — WITH MERCEDES COLLABORATION

The outcome of the struggle between Henlys, backed by Volvo, and Mayflower Corporation to acquire Dennis appears to have been determined by an increased offer from the latter. Mayflower has increased its offer to 475p per Dennis share, which now values the business at £268.9 million, an increase of £13.9 million on its previous offer. Mayflower has also bought shares representing around 16% of Dennis, building up its holding in the company to almost 30%. Henlys has decided not to increase its offer; its cash and share offer valued Dennis shares at 545p, but stockmarket conditions have deteriorated such that its offer is now worth only 448p per share. The Dennis board is still convinced that the Henlys bid would be in the best long-term interests of the company, but has withdrawn its recommendation to shareholders to accept the Henlys bid.

Mayflower Corporation, which owns Alexanders and, as reported last month, has acquired a 40% share in American bus builder, Metrotans, has announced a technical and commercial alliance with Daimler-Benz. Precise details are not yet known,

though it is clear that Daimler-Benz expects to supply Mercedes engines, axles and other components into Dennis vehicles, assuming the Mayflower deal is completed, and will have a hand in developing future Dennis models. Mayflower, which is already a component supplier to Mercedes, will not have a hand in developing future Daimler-Benz products.

Mayflower maintains that talks have been on-going with Daimler-Benz for several months, though the alliance would have a significant impact on Dennis should Mayflower emerge as the successful purchaser. In addition to component supply and future chassis development, the agreement would lead to worldwide distribution of Dennis products, including fire engines and refuse vehicles through Daimler-Benz's dealer network. At present Dennis sources engines from Cummins. Mercedes engines were last used by Dennis in a very small number of Falcon double-deckers some 15 years ago.

At present it is not clear whether the Monopolies & Mergers Commission will wish to investigate the likely merger.

BERKHOF SELLS TO VDL

The Berkhof-Jonckheere Group has been sold by the owning Berkhof family to VDL Groep. VDL comprises 42 operating companies, including DAF Bus International and Smit Autobusfabriek. The companies in the Berkhof-Jonckheere Group, which were described in *Buses September*, will continue to trade as autonomous units within VDL. They represent VDL's largest takeover to date

VOLVO INTO MEXICO

Volvo has acquired Mexican's second largest bus and coach manufacturer, Mexicana de Autobuses (MASA). MASA, based at Tultitlan, near Mexico City, sold 928 vehicles in the first half of 1998. Much of its production is of coaches, but it also builds some citybuses. MASA comes under Volvo's North American activities, Prevost and Novobus, and Volvo is to sell 35% of the equity on to Henlys, its partner in its American ventures. Volvo also intends to assemble S70 and V70 cars at the MASA factory.

STAGECOACH EXPANDS IN NEW ZEALAND . . .

Stagecoach Holdings has added to its portfolio of overseas bus companies by acquiring publicly-owned Yellow Bus Company in Auckland, New Zealand, during August. Stagecoach already runs services in New Zealand, primarily in Wellington, where it acquired the local operator six years ago, and already has some tendered services in Auckland. Yellow Bus runs more than 500 buses, 100 of them recent Nissan Scorpions with glass-fibre bodywork by Fairfax. Stagecoach paid NZ\$111.6 million (£35 million) for Yellow Bus and has undertaken to introduce 60 new MANs there by the end of this year. MAN is already the main

supplier to Stagecoach for buses in New Zealand. These will reduce the average age of the fleet from 12 to nine years, and Stagecoach intends to introduce a further 200 new buses between 1999 and 2001. It also has plans to increase services and introduce minibuses.

Stagecoach has also taken a controlling stake in an Auckland ferry operator, Fullers Group Ltd, which runs six 600-passenger high-speed ferries and a specialised Seabus. Fullers also has a joint venture with Yellow Bus, The Link, which seeks to integrate fares and services between buses and the ferries.

. . . BUT PULLS OUT OF AFRICA

Stagecoach Holdings has sold its last African interests; Kenya Bus passed to its management on 1 October for 300m Kenyan Shillings (£3million).

Stagecoach first went into the African bus market in 1989, when BET subsidiary United Transport International sold its 51% shareholding in its Malawi operation. Stagecoach later increased its share of Malawi, but

sold the operation last year. Kenya Bus Services and KBS Mombassa were added in November 1991, but the Mombassa operation was soon sold. Faced with poor trading conditions in Nairobi Stagecoach considered the local management there was the best option for the future. It retains its property interests there however. Net assets of Kenya Bus Services Ltd are valued at £6 million.

END OF THE ROAD AT GREY-GREEN

The end of an era was reached on 2 October when Grey-Green ran its last Essex-London commuter service. This brought to an end 70 years of operations by the company between London and East Anglia, though the commuter services themselves began in 1981, shortly after coach deregulation.

The services have passed to Essex Express Ltd, which is a

joint company established by Fargo Coachlines of Rayne, Windmill Coaches of Stanway and H. C. Chambers of Bures. The last is one of the oldest companies in the coach business, with origins dating back to 1877. Services are to be reviewed shortly, with the addition of higher-quality vehicles and Wayfarer 3 ticketing equipment.

Grey-Green Duple Dominant II-bodied Leyland Leopard RYL 715R, duplicated by Bedford YMT YYL 718T, on East Anglia Express work at Colchester in 1979.

G. R. MORTIMER



HUNGARIAN DART RIVAL DOWN UNDER

Csepel, the Hungarian bus manufacturer, has introduced a rival vehicle to the Dennis Dart in the Australian market. The 633.0 is a low-floor chassis suitable for 10m bodywork with a Euro 2 Cummins B-series engine rated at 165bhp, driving through an Allison AT545 gearbox. The driveline is therefore virtually identical to the Dart and is mounted in-line at the rear. Like the Dart it has a Telma retarder and air suspension, though unlike the Dart this is independent at the front. The first to enter service, with Husseys Road Liners in Deniliquin, New South Wales has locally-built APG bodywork.

BUS PEOPLE

Mark Yaxley has been appointed managing director of Arriva Passenger Services' London operations. Previously marketing director of Leaside, he became acting managing director of the London operations in February and is now managing director of Arriva London North, Arriva London South, Arriva London North East and is also responsible for the Original London Sightseeing Tour. The previous London managing director, **Steve Clayton**, is now operations director for the whole of Arriva Passenger Services.

Patrick Faure has been appointed chairman of Renault Vehicles Industriel.

NEW 'DE MINIMIS' LIMITS

Dr John Reid, Transport Minister, has announced changes to tendering requirements to help local authorities to let bus service contracts more quickly. The maximum size of individual contracts which can be let without going through the tendering process increases from £10,000 to £12,000 a year, with a maximum of £70,000 to any one operator on

this basis, an increase from £50,000. Dr Reid said that the changes would help local authorities make the most of the opportunities offered by the new money for rural bus services.

The new arrangements came into force on 5 October. The de minimis limits were last increased in 1994.

PSV REGISTRATION FIGURES

The growth in the market for new PSVs continues, although August's figures for purpose-built PSVs were at a very similar level to last year. Truck-derived minibuses are showing considerable growth however.

A trend that is beginning to emerge is that growth in figures for market leaders Volvo and Dennis is currently flagging a little, while growth is being shown by manufacturers traditionally here on a smaller scale, Iveco, which is becoming more established in the coach sector, MAN and Mercedes, which is currently buoyed by large deliveries to Travel West Midlands. The figures do not, of course, include exports, and Dennis in particular is currently building considerable quantities for Hong Kong which do not show in these figures.

Also of note are the upturns being shown by DAF and Scania. Some of DAF's growth is down to the increasing use of its products by Arriva, which is DAF's importer as well as a major operator.

Manufacturer	June 1998	July 1998	August 1998	1998 total*
Bova	11 (1)	0 (1)	4 (8)	49 (44)
DAF	34 (8)	19 (11)	18 (8)	175 (102)
Dennis	141 (116)	50 (52)	91 (99)	878 (857)
Iveco	4 (2)	6 (1)	10 (5)	43 (26)
MAN	3 (1)	4 (0)	7 (2)	40 (13)
Mercedes-Benz	23 (0)	24 (0)	22 (0)	85 (22)
Optare	28 (12)	13 (8)	21 (29)	161 (141)
Scania	39 (23)	5 (13)	13 (26)	213 (159)
Volvo	159 (178)	51 (92)	148 (145)	1,235 (1,184)
Other British	1 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	15 (7)
Other imports	27 (8)	2 (1)	15 (21)	106 (112)
Total British	271 (218)	110 (117)	205 (196)	1,578 (1,462)
Total imports	199 (131)	66 (62)	144 (147)	1,422 (1,205)
Total purpose-built	470 (349)	176 (179)	349 (343)	3,000 (2,667)
Van-derived minibuses	124 (95)	65 (69)	193 (84)	925 (576)
Grand total	594 (444)	241 (248)	542 (427)	3,925 (3,243)

*Equivalent 1997 figures shown in brackets. Source — SMMT.

HANTS & SUSSEX REFUSES TO DIE

Despite all appearances, the sale of Hants & Sussex by Southampton Citybus to Emsworth & District on 1 June did not take place. Last April, Hants & Sussex lost several Hampshire County Council contracts to Emsworth & District, including trunk service 27 (Rowlands Castle-Havant-Emsworth) and Southampton Citybus offered the rest of the business to Emsworth & District. To improve efficiency vehicles and staff of the two operators were integrated from 1 June, but in the end agreement for the sale could not be reached and the two firms went their separate ways in July.

Southampton Citybus has recently changed its trading name; under FirstGroup ownership it was trading as First Citybus; now, in line with other FirstGroup companies it is known by a more geographic name, First Southampton.

DIARY DATES

27 October:

Omnibus Society meeting. 'We liked it so much...' Andrew Bryce, operations director of Wilts & Dorset, London Transport headquarters, 55 Broadway, London, SW1 (above St James's Park Underground station), 18.45hrs.

24 November:

Omnibus Society meeting. Richard Leadbeater, managing director, Guide Friday, London Transport headquarters, 55 Broadway, London, SW1 (above St James's Park Underground station), 18.45hrs.

EVOBUS HQ OPENED

EvoBus — the Daimler-Benz subsidiary controlling sales of Mercedes-Benz and Setra vehicles in Europe — has formally opened its new UK headquarters in Coventry. The new premises, situated in Crosspoint Business Park, close to the M6 motorway, brings together the sales activities of both Setra, which was based in Lincoln, and Mercedes-Benz, whose bus and coach sales were handled from Mercedes-Benz UK's overall headquarters at Milton Keynes.

Although the EvoBus activities are all under one roof, sales of Mercedes-Benz coaches and Setras are kept completely separate; both ranges are still offered side by side and each its own dedicated sales team. Customers are made aware of the differentiation by the fact that the Mercedes end of the operation has a predominantly blue carpet and Setra has predominantly red!

The new centre handles used coach sales and also Mercedes PSV minibus sales, and has an impressive workshop and stores facility. The stores supply other EvoBus dealerships around the country and can supply operators direct. The workshop has pits to accommodate two full-size vehicles or three minibuses each and has full facilities to handle

bodywork as well as mechanical repairs. It has Centre of Excellence recognition within EvoBus.

The headquarters were opened officially by the Lord Mayor of Coventry, Councillor Mrs Rosher, who recalled the days of bus manufacture in the city by Maudslay and Daimler (correcting the German pronunciation of the latter in the context of Daimler-Benz used by EvoBus personnel to the way she said Coventry people preferred to remember it!).

EvoBus has plans to expand its presence in the UK market, and has been particularly successful with orders for Travel West Midlands, now its local operator.

Meanwhile EvoBus gave British operators their first opportunity to examine the Cito midibus, described in *Buses* September, which was fresh from its Hanover launch. EvoBus is currently gauging reaction to the diesel-electric fully low-floor midibus to see whether it should be re-engineered to suit the British market. EvoBus officials are confident that they could introduce the very stylish Cito at



The new Mercedes-Benz Cito and a Setra S 250 for West Kingsdown at the new EvoBus UK headquarters in Coventry.

NEW SETRA LAUNCHED AT COVENTRY

EvoBus took the opportunity at the opening of its new headquarters to hand over the first Setra S 315 GT-HD for a British operator. This went appropriately to Kirby's of Rayleigh, in Essex, which was the very first UK operator to take delivery of a Setra, some 30 years ago. Kirby's still has that unusual machine, which has a

The wraps comes off the new Setra S 315 GT HD for Kirby's of Rayleigh. Kirby's also had the very first Setra for a British operator.



Henschel engine. The S 315 GT-HD has an 11-litre V6 Mercedes-Benz OM441LA engine, independent front suspension and front disc brakes. It is a 49-seater with typically understated styling which looks crisp and smart and is unlikely to date. A second vehicle was handed over to Crusader of Clacton.



This new Setra S 315 GT HD for Crusader Coaches, Clacton, was also present for the opening of EvoBus UK's new headquarters.

CHANGE OF NAME FOR CHESHIRE

Bus rental specialist Cheshire Bus & Coach has changed its name. It is now known as Mistral Group (UK) plc, with its headquarters in Knutsford, Cheshire. It has a fleet of Dennis Darts and Mercedes minibuses for rental, including a new seven-day rental scheme, and the company can now offer 30-seat buses to DiPTAC specification and fitted with tail lifts.

Mistral is run by Simon Fawcett, the former managing director of Star Line Travel, which he sold to British Bus in 1996, and Mike Martin, who until 1996 was national coach sales manager for Dennis.

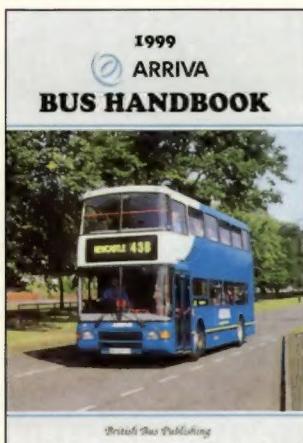
FIRSTGROUP FOCUS

Buses Focus 9 is on sale now, price £2.95. It covers FirstGroup, and looks at the group's vehicle policy and the implementation of high-quality services, using Bradford Sovereign as an example. Other features include FirstGroup's London operations, including Croydon Tramlink, Mainline as a new acquisition, modern technology as evidenced in the Leeds guided busway, Provincial in Portsmouth, FirstGroup's two forebears, Badgerline Ltd (now a part of Bristol again) and First Aberdeen (previously GRT) and there are photo features covering the current livery policy and buses in East Anglia and South Wales. Also featured are the Hong Kong and rail operations, and there is a listing of FirstGroup's UK bus companies.

Buses Focus 9 is edited by Gavin Booth and Stephen Morris and is available from good newsagents, Ian Allan Bookshops and other specialist outlets, or direct from the publisher at the address on p5.

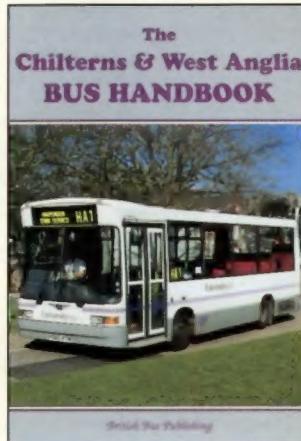
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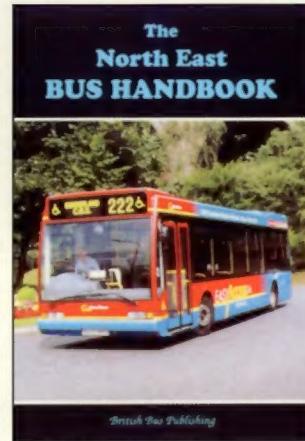
The 1999 Arriva Bus Handbook

The new edition of the Arriva Bus handbook is now being prepared for release in November. Fleets included include the newly acquired European operations. Cost £15.00



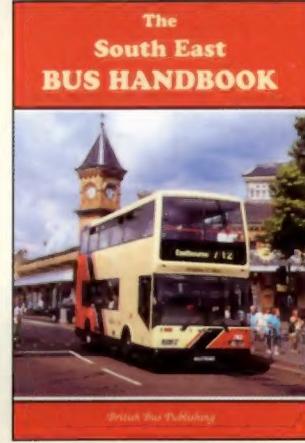
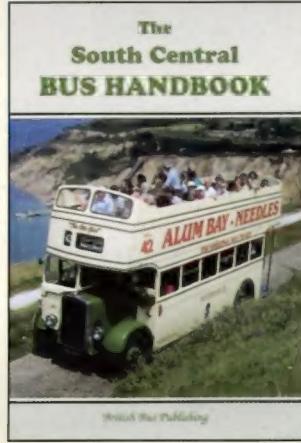
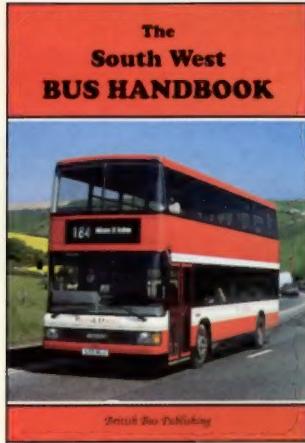
Chilterns & West Anglia Bus Handbook

Recently released, the Chilterns & West Anglia Bus Handbook covers the area from Northamptonshire to Buckinghamshire. Packed with interesting fleets and allocations for just £12.50



The North East Bus Handbook

A new edition of this regional book for the North East is currently being prepared for sale early in the new year. Pictures for the publication are currently sought, particularly the interesting independents from the area. Order now at £12.50



The South East Bus Handbook is now nearing completion and continues eastward from our South Central edition, thus all the southern area books will have been updated during the year. The coverage includes all known operators of commercial services as well as the main coaching companies. These latest books can be ordered for £12.50 each.

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The Lancashire, Cumbria & Manchester Bus Handbook*

The Hong Kong Bus Handbook (£9.95)

The East Midlands Bus Handbook (£9.95)

The 1998 Stagecoach Bus Handbook (£15.00)

The 1998 FirstBus Bus Handbook (£15.00)

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Unitary Warrington has produced its first map and frequency-guide, though credit must also go to Cheshire who initiated the concept (tel: 01925 444250). From FWT, one side shows the whole area with green roads carrying reversed-out names and red routenumbers. All streets are named. A symbol distinguishes routes that operate evenings/Sundays. The reverse has a blow-up of the town centre with stops named and a summary of rail services, but with the main part a chart showing each route — long-distance and local — with first/last buses from each terminal and frequencies between 08.00 and 18.00 and after 18.00. An excellent production.

From Wales comes the latest timetable from Ceredigion (tel: 01545 575412). This is one of the Principality's highest-quality publications and the

rear cover opens out to form a system map from FWT. This was there last year, but the reverse — the outside cover — is new, having a very novel map of Aberystwyth (probably in-house). It is a view as if from the air out to sea and shows well the appearance of the steep hills that rise towards the National Library. Only town routes are indicated, but many sites are shown in detail. Knowing the town very well I feel as if I am almost there — a sure sign of a successful map.

The ever-excellent Gwynedd still improves with many extra maps in its new timetable book (tel: 01286 679535). The centrepiece is a black & white system map from FWT, but throughout the book are excellent town maps: for Bala, Bangor, Barmouth, Bethesda, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Caernarfon, Dolgellau, Llanberis, Llanrug, Porthmadog, Pwllheli, Tywyn and even a sketch of Machynlleth, despite its being in Powys.

Turning to operators, First Leicester has produced more booklets (tel: 0116 253 8000). True, anything is an improvement on the municipal days when it was mapless and produced mere 12-hour leaflets. Now it has A5 24-hour booklets, each with a full colour map from FWT showing each route with its own colour and with all stops indicated, and they look fine as there are never many colours together. The problem is that each of the six shows its own routes with no reference to the others — indeed, there may even be more than six for the whole system. Appreciating the network it operates in Leicester is impossible.

best side! The map itself is diagrammatic — perfectly clear, but so lacking in reality. Twenty routes disappear into a large 'Crowngate Bus Station' box and the background is plain white. I know the city centre quite well but cannot visualise where any of these routes go — the complete opposite of the Aberystwyth map above.

Huntingdon & District is relatively new, but has wasted no time in producing some decent leaflets with very clear maps (tel: 01480 453159). What an improvement on the previous owner's attempts (mapless United Counties)! Leaflets have plans for towns

through which the routes pass, so, in total we have them complete for Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots, but also in some leaflets plans showing the route taken by just that

service in a town. Each shows red roads with reversed-out names and blue numbers. Excellent! As the owner is the Blazefield Group perhaps it will now do the same for its home territory — the mapless Harrogate, Keighley & District and Yorkshire Coastliner!

Where a diagrammatic map can work well is with a large network where the need for local detail does not apply, and then of course it should only be as an addition to other maps. One such example comes from Travel West Midlands with its Birmingham Pocket Map (tel: 0121 200 2700 — the Centro line). This shows routes around Birmingham as far afield as Wolverhampton and Solihull. Each has a different colour. The key is too small, but the number shows up well on the route so it does not matter too much. The rear shows the rail network and a Birmingham City centre plan and the laminated map folds in three to measure just 12cm by 10cm.

ON THE MAP

BARRY S DOE C.Math, MIMA, MCIT

First Northampton has adopted the same approach with identical style maps, having given up its single folder in favour of five booklets (tel: 01604 755155). As all five combined would still only make a small booklet what is the point of fragmenting the network in this way and thereby deterring people from understanding it?

First Midland Red has re-issued its system map (tel: 01905 763888). From Pindar this large sheet shows all routes in green with red numbers, but blue numbers where the service is operated at most times by other operators. The background is odd, as if it is meant to look like old parchment! Proper relief would have been more useful as well as better in appearance. The reverse has a frequency-chart.

Town maps are usually in its excellent timetable books, but it has produced a separate map of Worcester showing the full timetables of all the city routes on the rear. The rear is the

THE FENTON FILE

You probably hoped we were joking last month when we suggested MIKE FENTON might follow a Bristol VRT and a Leyland National with a Dennis Dart...

Say what you will about Dennis, but when they get a good name they do stick with it! Arrow, Falcon, Lance, and Lancet have all been plucked from the past and recycled in recent years as, of course, has Dart.

At the last count this name had been used on three completely different models, the latest, and most successful, being so well known as to require no further comment. Happily still with us is also a preserved example of a first generation Dart in the shape of Duple-bodied TJ 836, one of around 100 of the normal control version built in the early 1930s. In between the two, and less well known, was the forward control Dart of the late seventies; a heavy duty, straight framed, Perkins V8-powered model available in left or right hand drive form.

Though intended solely for overseas use, not all of them actually left the country and chassis SD304/102, with MoD-style Marshall Campaigner bodywork, found its way into the ownership of the West Midlands Fire Service. No doubt the specification endeared it to its owner with many components common to their fire appliances.

By the time it was photographed in August 1990, the ten-year-old DOJ 113V had been transferred to Coventry following several years of operation in Birmingham.

Today's Dennis Dart is a very numerous low-floor rear-engined lightweight; that of the 1980s was an export-market high-floor, front-engined heavyweight. One of the few to see service in Britain is DOJ 113V of the West Midlands Fire Service.
MIKE FENTON



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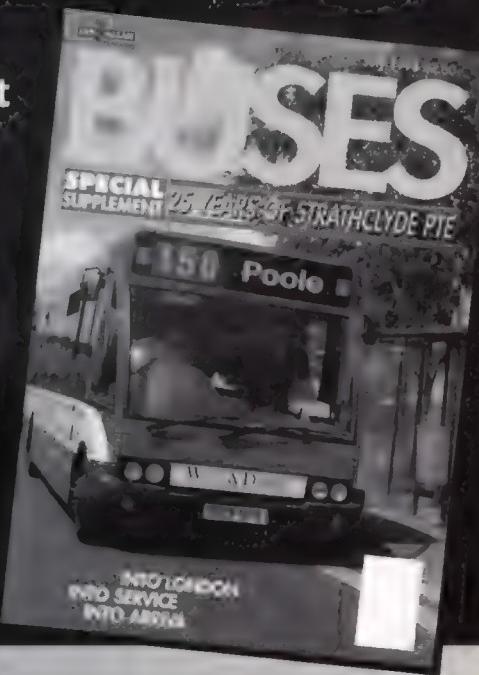
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THE WRONG CUTS

If a journey on your local bus route is cut because of driver shortage, one might expect that that meant a driver was unexpectedly off sick, or that there were vacancies for drivers on that particular route.

But I learn that it is not as simple as that. When you get to the fringes of London, county councils can also be involved in the performance, or non-performance, of an operator on a particular service. Sometimes, as in London, there are penalty payments too for non-performance. Unfortunately the amount varies from route to route, and that is where unscrupulous operators are cutting services on routes where there is not a staff shortage, but where the penalty payments are lower, rather than on one where there is a staff shortage.

That seems dishonest, and is also hard on drivers, who receive most public complaints yet may know that there is actually no shortage there.

A wider issue is the enthusiasm for high scheduled mileage-operated figures, and consequent dislike of cuts. Yet turning late-running buses short to get a route back to normal as quickly as possible is much more beneficial to passengers. A few operators, I am told, are particularly well-known for running almost all the mileage, to the detriment of regularity. Buses following each other, while there are big gaps in the service going in the opposite direction, should be in nobody's real interest.

OUT OF TOWN

We are told that large out-of-town retail developments have now become more difficult, following the introduction of new town planning guidelines. Or is that just the *implementation* of planning guidelines saying much the same thing which came in some five years ago and seem to have been largely ignored? One development, just announced, that complies with the 'new' requirements will be at White City. Its promoters say it will provide unrivalled opportunities for public transport, whatever that may mean.

At almost the same time the developers of the Bluewater complex, just off the M25 and near Dartford, have produced a brochure with some impressive plans for very wide use of public transport. There will be a shuttle bus service from Greenhithe station, frequent buses to Dartford and Gravesend, and other relatively frequent bus links to Bromley, Eltham, the Medway Towns, Maidstone, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells.

There will be only limited car park space, we are told, but closer reading reveals that it is the staff

car parks that will be small, and not those for the customers. Commendably, in British Airports Authority style, there will be fares discounts for staff employed at Bluewater.

All that sounds impressive, and perhaps profits from experiences at the other large retail site also just off the M25 and not that far away, but on the other side of the river, at Lakeside. The experience of bus operators serving that development does not seem to have been very happy, with First Capital for example now reducing its services there as part of changes involving its commercially-operated routes between Hornchurch Romford Thurrock and Lakeside. The changes simplify the present route structure, and — those ominous words — 'match the services more closely to current usage.' It is the coach operators, with day excursion traffic, who seem to have profited most from Lakeside, particularly in the run-up to Christmas, when one often sees notices that the Lakeside excursion on such-and-such a date is now full.

FRIENDLY BOROUGH

If there were any prizes for London boroughs with particularly enlightened policies towards buses, they should be won by Hackney and Sutton. Hackney is busy removing as quickly as possible from its roads all the obstructions which at present preclude low-floor double-deckers running on route 242 (Tottenham Court Road-Hackney-Homerton). Arriva London North hopes to introduce its new DAF-Alexander buses, class DLA, quite soon, and already is already using the prototype on driver familiarisation work, from Clapton depot. All being well, this will be the first London route to be worked by low-floor double-deckers.

Over on the other side of London, Sutton is soon to fund yet another new local route, S5 (Mitcham Common-Wallington, off-peak only). Its record is outstanding, particularly when you reflect that outer London locations are not the easiest in which to introduce new routes that not only fulfil a need, but also are not desperate loss-makers.

The first Plaxton President on a DAF DB250 chassis visited London Transport Buses for inspection very briefly on 3 September. It is expected to be Arriva London North DLN1 (S201 JUA). The body styling has been watered down a bit from the concept bus at Coach & Bus '97; bonded glazing has been replaced by traditional Northern Counties gasket glazing and the front upper deck windscreens are now divided. These are no doubt all very practical, but the bus loses its initial impact as a result. However for the sake of our editor and others who think these things are important, it does at least boast a rear window!

GEOFF RIXON



JUBILEE LINE UP-DATE

Last month we mentioned the early announcement of proposed changes to some 50 routes in south-east and south London when the Jubilee Line extension to Stratford opens next Spring. Now five-year contracts have been awarded for half-a-dozen routes, all for low-floor buses. I just hope that the passenger-carrying projections for the tube line are correct, or at least pessimistic rather than too optimistic, since the operators will no doubt have based their bids on them.

Three routes remain with their present operators. These are 69 (Stagecoach East London: to become Walthamstow Central-Leyton-Stratford-Canning Town), D6 (First Capital: Hackney Central-Mile End-Isle of Dogs) and D8 (First Capital: Stratford-Canary Wharf-Isle of Dogs).

BEXLEYHEATH — THE LATEST SCHEME

Another of those big schemes, so beloved by the planners at LT, is on the cards for Bexleyheath, Woolwich and Thamesmead, with a likely start date of early next year. Apparently the changes have already been discussed informally with local authorities and the London Regional Passengers Committee.

There would be changes to 15 routes, three new routes would be introduced, and another three withdrawn. Many of the routes would ultimately gain new low-floor buses. One part of the proposals would provide a simpler routeing structure round the Thamesmead loop, while another, briefly detailed in last month's issue, sees the cut-back of former Green Line route 726 to run no further east than Bromley, with replacement apparently provided between there and Dartford by changes and diversions to ordinary bus services.

We reported on the new contracts briefly in the September issue. What was not

Route D7 (Mile End-Poplar) will transfer from Stagecoach East London to First Capital. One new route is 474 (Canning Town-East Beckton), replacing the southern half of the present 69, which will be operated by Blue Triangle, which is certainly not a newcomer to London bus operation. But winning this route will bring its involvement into the LT area proper: at present it has one route into Romford, and another in Loughton. The second new route is D3, a Bethnal Green-Isle of Dogs local service which will be operated by Stagecoach East London.

The 69 and 474 will be double-deck, with low-floor double-deckers to be introduced in the first year of operation, which means before Spring 2000. The other routes will be low-floor single-decker.

so long ago Kentish Bus and is now Arriva Kent Thameside seemed the loser since it will only provide about 15 buses instead of 50 in the present Bexleybus network. The other big current provider, London Central, lost some routes but gained others, but the big success was for Stagecoach Selkent, which had no routes here, but has gained six.

Ironically, it was the loss of a route in Croydon at the end of August and the 'slack' in the system until the new year that has helped Selkent to step in and run the 60 (Old Coulsdon-Streatham Common) on a temporary basis instead of Capital Logistics. Selkent also seems better able to recruit and retain drivers than many other London operators, and — no doubt helped by a recent wage increase — has also had drivers moving to it from other operators. The turnaround is all the more remarkable in that only a couple of years ago there were rumours that Stagecoach wanted to sell the company.

A late change in the Croydon area saw route 60 (Old Coulsdon-Streatham Common) operated by Stagecoach Selkent on a short-term basis as subcontractor to Capital Logistics. In turn Blue Triangle provided two Titans as sub contractors to Selkent. Both operators are using Titans, with very different blind displays; one of Blue Triangle's is pictured here in Old Coulsdon.
JOHN ALDRIDGE



IN BRIEF

Stagecoach Selkent took over operation of route 225 (Lewisham-Bermondsey) from Arriva London North East on 26 September. The change is said to be by agreement between the operators, and not a reassignment by LT.

The fourth operator to run route 404 (Coulsdon-Caterham-on-the-Hill) since it began less than two years ago is Epsom Buses, which replaced Metrobus East Surrey on 26 September. Metrobus ran the route on a short-term basis after it was given up by London & Country, which had taken over from Londonlinks.

Thorpe's replaced Arriva London North East on route 210 (Finsbury Park-Brent Cross) on 26 September, with new low-floor Dennis Dart SLFs. Arriva had normally used Volvo B10Ms with East Lancs EL2000 bodies. Thorpe's is best known for its operation of the central London Stationlink routes SL1 and SL2 with Optare Excels, but also runs C4 (another central London route), and numerous Mobility Bus routes (numbered in the 800s and 900s) for LT.

The seasonal park-&-ride service at Bromley this Christmas and New Year will be operated this year by Orpington Buses, part of First CentreWest, using five midibuses from its existing fleet.

FREE FOR ALL

Yet another new bus route at Heathrow Airport is likely to begin in early November. British Airways is providing the funding for the H30, running from the new Waterside Development (where BA has its new head office) on the north-west corner of Heathrow to Hatton Cross Station, on the south-east corner, Terminal 4, the Cargo Centre and the central bus station in Heathrow.

Buses would run every 15 minutes on Monday to Saturday daytime, every 20 minutes in the early evenings, and every half-hour in late evenings and on Sundays. The operator is Speedlink Airport

Services, already well-known within Heathrow and for its airport coach services. But I think this is its first public bus venture. The route is, of course, intended mainly for airport and airline staff but will be available for everybody. Low-floor single-deckers will be used, and the contract will run for five years. Presumably the buses will be some of those low-floor Plaxton Prestige-bodied DAF SB220s that were used to link with the Heathrow Fast Train service before that ran right through to the airport.

No fares will be charged as the route is entirely within the Heathrow Free Fare zone.

TRAMLINK ROLLS INTO TOWN



The first of the Tramlink vehicles has now been delivered from its supplier, Bombardier Transportation in Belgium and is resident at Croydon. Arrived in the Brooklands Tower area of Croydon, they are based on a design for Cologne. Pictures by JOHN ALDRIDGE

MILLAR'S Tales

ALAN MILLAR'S MONTHLY COLUMN OF MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Whatever happened to...? ...the Brits abroad

The globalising of the bus industry has advanced since I summarised progress 12 months ago. That was the first anniversary of our announcement of Stagecoach's completion of its £232 million purchase of Swebus from the Swedish railways. Stagecoach had already sold off the Norwegian and Danish wings and Cowie, as Arriva was still known, had bought Unibus of Copenhagen in its first European move.

Stagecoach admits it's had a tough time since then trying to squeeze more profit out of Swebus in an inflexible labour market where competitive pressures nonetheless drive down contract prices. Stagecoach Portugal, although much smaller, is far more profitable and it's significant that Stagecoach's most recent purchase — £34.7 million for Yellow Bus of Auckland's 530 buses — was in New Zealand where it now has nearly 1,000 buses and controls an Auckland harbour ferry company.

Unibus is now Arriva Dansk and Arriva Nederland is on track to run more than 850 Dutch buses. FirstGroup has a 26% stake in the

New World FirstBus joint venture in Hong Kong while National Express — now earning only 5% of its profits from coach services — owns 100-vehicle Group Bronckaers in Belgium and the 1,200-vehicle Crabtree-Harmon school bus fleet in America. NatEx also has a 67% stake in Concordia, a joint venture with Schoyens of Norway which is eyeing up Scandinavian and northern European acquisition opportunities as countries like Germany edge slowly towards British practice.

But we're not alone. Last year, I reminded you that Sweden's Linjebuss, with interests in Scandinavia, Germany and Belgium, was one to watch. It's since been taken over by CGEA, the French water, waste and transport giant which now calls itself Vivendi and runs Connex trains here. French groups Transdev and VIA-GTI are already in Britain, respectively as owner of London United and partner with Go-Ahead running Thameslink trains. Where will they all be next year?

YOU'D THINK THEY WOULD NEVER FORGET

The Elephant, London Transport once told us in the title of a film commemorating the end of the capital's trams, Will Never Forget. But it seems more recent history has been forgotten as LT prepares to turn itself into New Labour's Transport for London.

The latest edition of *London Lines*, LT's magazine, includes an article on how the organisation managed to get through 1997/98 without a penny of government operating subsidy. Indeed, it tells us that buses made a surplus of a penny for every 100 kilometres travelled. And how, I hear you

ask, does it illustrate this story of good fiscal news? With images of London's public transport. And is the image of the bus, you ask further, in the mould of a Dart SLF or Optare Excel? You and I might expect that, but would you believe it's a DMS Fleetline straight out of a dusty archive file?

Has LT changed so much in recent years that no one at London Lines remembers not only that these buses have all gone, but that the organisation generated much heat and light in justifying the disposal of most of them long before the ends of their economic lives?

ARRIVA NAILS ITS COLOURS TO A FLYING TOASTRACK . . .

You just can't escape them. One of the latest vehicles to be adorned in Arriva's corporate aquamarine and Cotswold stone is the Crazy Bus, a 24 seat toastrack contraption that forms part of what's described as a family ride at the Drayton Manor theme park near Tamworth.

It's been sponsored by Arriva Midlands North to reinforce its new brand identity and, I'm told, the Crazy Bus — complete with descriptor reading 'serving Drayton Manor Park' — rotates to a dizzy height of 21 feet, then drops and loops round and round. I think I'd personally prefer a brisk ride in one of the worst mid-eighties minibuses, even though Bob Emery, Arriva's Tamworth

general manager (he's the slightly anxious-looking chap sitting in the front seat), doesn't seem to be promising to keep all his main fleet's wheels on the ground all the time. 'Drayton Manor Park prides itself on offering a thrill a minute,' he says, adding cautiously: 'Hopefully, riding on normal Arriva buses is not quite so thrilling.'



. . . WHILE AMERICA JIVES TO RACK'N'ROLL

My fellow Busline presenter, Andrew Jarosz, has returned from Florida with news of what could well be the next American trend to make its way across the Atlantic. In a move which could help John Prescott achieve the British government's goal of getting more of us to cycle and use buses, Andrew tells me that US transit bus fleets are starting to fit cycle racks in a big way.

When he visited California last year, San Diego's 300 buses were the only ones he found bearing bike racks in the sunshine state, but he reckons most of the buses in Tampa and Orlando have got them now and the movement is almost certainly spreading.

Orlando brands them Rack'n'Roll. Meanwhile, editor Stephen Morris found similar contraptions almost as far away as you can get from

California and Florida in the USA, at Duluth, Minnesota, up on the chilly shores of Lake Superior, earlier this year. How long before tendering authorities start asking for similar features on British buses?

The trouble, I suspect, will centre on where the racks are fitted. If they can't be accommodated inside the bus, the front is the only logical place to keep bikes secure and in sight of the driver. The Vehicle Inspectorate is liable to work itself into a lather over the extra length of a decent-sized rack which, judging by American practice, also seems to obscure one set of headlamps. And designers of some of the prettier new bus designs on the market — a quality few would level at Orlando's (or Duluth's) box-like Gillig Phantoms — may need to consider how to maintain positive visual impact with a row of bicycles perched in front.



THE BUS INDUSTRY'S SECRET DYNASTY

The impending retirement of Arriva chief executive Gordon Hodgson has prompted a crazy thought. Is there a secret dynasty which fetches up in high places around this industry? And does that dynasty go by the names of Hodgson and Hodson?

It's just that, aside from Arriva's soon-to-depart head honcho, there's been rather a lot of these 'H' people around in recent years. Like Clive Hodgson, Alexander's sales director, and his near namesake Clive Hodson, managing director of London

Transport Buses. Then there was Ken Hodgson, erstwhile chairman of the equally erstwhile Caldaire and Westcourt groups, and John Hodson, former joint managing director of Strathclyde Buses.

I don't know how many Hodsons or Hodgsons you know, but I strongly suspect the names are more common in upper echelons of the bus industry than in British society as a whole. And if you're blessed with either name, you could be on the fast track to a successful career move.

VODKA ON THE ROCKS

If you're thinking of toasting the bus industry's future with alcohol, I suggest you avoid the Russian spirit, the one they used to advertise on telly as Wodka from Varrington, for it's causing no end of bother at least to FirstGroup.

First Leeds got it in the neck from the Advertising Standards Authority after a teenager's parents complained that their offspring had been issued with a 20p ticket with an apple-scented scratch-and-sniff advertisement for Source, a vodka-based alcopop drink, on the back.

The company responded with commendable haste by returning all its unused ticket rolls to the supplier with a stiff warning that it doesn't ever want to see their like again, but you can't help wondering if it's passing up the opportunity to sell bus travel to adults in sad need of even the mildest fix. And John Carr, who passed on this story published in the Yorkshire Post, wonders if we need to set up a support group for scratch-and-sniff ticket addicts. Then, as you'll see in this month's Fleet News

Scotland, two sets of the Boys in Blue north of the border have put the mockers on the back-end Smirnoff advertisements (August Tales) that turn FirstGroup double-deckers into what look like fast-reversing London Routemasters. Perhaps the cops will now put their minds to finding some road safety arguments against all the other atrocities that disguise bus backs as delivery lorries and gable ends.

The Smirnoff backs came complete with genuine registration plates in the proper place below the Routemaster grille. Had that idea been tried at Western National back in National Bus Company days, there would have been every chance of adding realism by selecting buses with rather appropriate VOD-K registrations. And come to think of it, that very mark adorned some Western National/Devon General Marshall-bodied Bristol LHSs whose identical front and back windscreens made it harder to tell their ends apart. Now that would have given the police something to worry about.



Devon General Marshall-bodied Bristol LH93 (VOD 93K) at Exeter in 1975. These strange little buses had the same windscreen at the back and the front.
ALAN MILLAR



OF FOSSILS AND WITCHES' HATS

Your sightings of out-of-date and crazily placed bus stops continue to amaze and amuse. Please keep sending them in.

In the fossils category, E. Evans found an NBC era Crosville sign, complete with timetable case at the same level as the flag and route number R8, between Pwllheli and Tudweiloig on the Lleyn peninsula. He says the R8 hasn't run under that identity since 1986 and now, of course, that bit of Crosville rejoices in the Welsh/Italian moniker of Arriva Cymru.

Meanwhile, A. Madeley from London found himself at Tantobie in County Durham and almost tripped over a Northern bus stop placed none-too-delicately on what looks like those witches' hats more associated with Welsh folklore. What's more amazing is that he saw a bus stop there.

THE ULTIMATE STATUS SYMBOL

There may still be time to make your bid to buy the ultimate status symbol for readers of this magazine. A Scottish lawyer has bequeathed registration number BUS 1 to Glasgow's Royal Hospital for Sick Children and the hospital (phone 0141-201 0728) is auctioning the plate to the highest bidder. It would be nice to think that this 1930s number which, to the best of my knowledge has never graced a bus before, might now find its way on to a significant or high profile PSV.



ENQUIRE WITHIN

What's the story of Volvo?

Volvo has dominated the British bus and coach market since it bought Leyland Bus 10 years ago and it was a steadily growing force almost from the moment it launched its B58 here in 1972. Yet many of us still know less of the history of this global bus maker than we can trot out about sadly disappeared domestic builders like AEC or Daimler.

The company, it goes almost without saying, is Swedish, but its name is Latin for 'roll'. It was founded in 1915 as a subsidiary of ball bearing manufacturer SKF and began assembling cars in 1926 and trucks two years later. In 1931, it acquired the resources needed to make it into the global, vertically-integrated business it is today by buying Sköde Gjuteri och Mekaniska Verkstad, the company that made its engines. Wisely, it didn't keep the old company name. Volvo broke away from SKF in 1935.

Its British bus and coach success was greatly helped in 1951 by its launch of the B655, its first underfloor-engined chassis. That model remained in production until it was replaced by the B755 in 1964 and it, in turn, was succeeded by the B58 in 1966. That was succeeded by the B10M 14 years later and the rest, as they say, is history.

Except that Volvo nearly was amalgamated with Renault a few years back to create what would have been a French-controlled automotive giant. That fell apart when Swedish shareholders rebelled and, instead, European bus production is being concentrated in Sweden and Poland and, in partnership with Plaxton parent Henlys, Volvo has made big moves into North and Central America.

15G



Left:

The weather was excellent for the first part of the week, but by the Tuesday it had turned to archetypal Welsh weather. Somehow the sombre green of East London's restored Green Line Routemaster, RMC1461, seems to blend well with the overall greyness which characterises the area in such conditions. This is Beddgelert.

Below:

Leaside Travel's RMC1453 was hired in to help run the 15; the background scenery, near Rheddu, is hardly typical of the 15 on which red Routemasters are usually to be found!

One of the best-known routes operated by Stagecoach East London is the 15, East Ham-Paddington, which uses Routemasters and traverses Central London. However from 29 August to 4 September the company also ran another 15. It shouldn't have caused too much confusion, as there was no overlap between the two; this 15 ran from Penrhyneddraeth to Caernarfon!

Five buses were used on the service, three of them Stagecoach East London's own fleet. Another former Green Line coach Routemaster in red livery, came from Stagecoach's own preserved collection — it is usually looked after by Bluebird — and, due to a shortage of Routemasters which could be spared for a holiday in North Wales from Upton Park garage, a similar bus was hired from Leaside Travel. Leaside Travel was Leaside's coach and private hire business, at the time of the service was part of Arriva East Herts & Essex (formerly County Bus & Coach) and is now part of Arriva London Northern (formerly Leaside) again! Volunteers from Stagecoach companies crewed the buses, and Gwynedd Council lent its support — in fact it was the council which arranged for the appropriate 15 service number.

The service ran in conjunction with the Ffestiniog Railway as part of its 'Farewell to Summer' festival and provided connections with the Welsh Highland Railway at Caernarfon. An hourly service ran over the whole route, with a 20min service between Beddgelert, Porthmadog and Penrhyneddraeth. Combined bus/rail tickets gave unlimited travel all day, while local fares were also available and Gwynedd Rover tickets were both sold and accepted.

Kevin Cooper from Stagecoach East London and some of his colleagues organised the service, and he was well-pleased with some of the loads carried. 'It's an interesting experience driving a Routemaster along some of those roads around Caernarfon with a full load on!', he said.



OESWEST

Below:

Four Routemasters were used on the Gwynedd service 15, but the most popular bus with the general public was T512, the open-top Leyland Titan. It is seen here at Tremadog, near Portmadog.

Normally you can't find a Stagecoach bus within about 100 miles of Caernarfon. JOHN YOUNG however managed to photograph some in August



Opposite below:

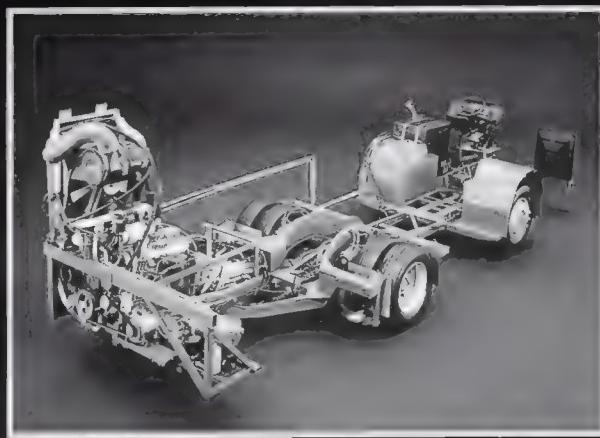
Also at Beddgelert is numerically the last Routemaster of them all, Stagecoach East London's RML2760. RML2760 is allowed a few deviations from usual Stagecoach dress in view of its special status; though the original-style flake grey band has now been replaced by cream, as on Stagecoach's other Routemasters, it has a gold underlined fleetname — even though that style would have been obsolete when the bus was new!

Left:

A shortage of spare Routemasters from Upton Park led to the use of RMC1490 from Stagecoach's preserved fleet appearing on the 15. It has an interesting collection of branding on it; gold London Transport fleetnames combine with Selkent 'bunch of hops' emblems, from the days before privatisation, and Stagecoach logos on the bus in this view at Waunfawr.

VOLVO'S NEW LOW- FLOOR RANGE

Recently announced is Volvo's new generation low-floor bus range. We look a little closer at the B7L



Above:

A rear view of the Volvo B7L. Just visible is part of the 80° angled propshaft where it enters the offset diff; the gangway continues at low level across the axle, although appears rather narrow at that point. The gangway is almost level along the length of the bus.

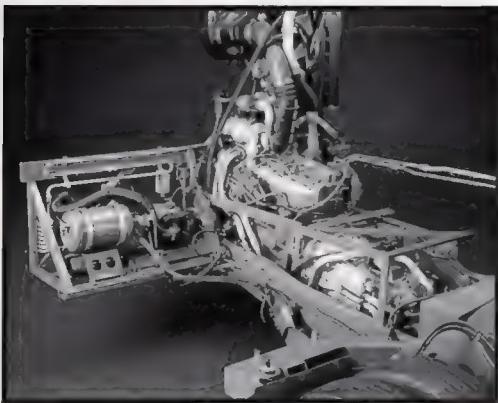


Below:

The Volvo B7L chassis in short form for splitting by bodybuilders. Note the fuel tank shaped around the front offside wheelarch and high-mounted cooling system above the engine.

Volvo's rise in the British bus and coach market has been nothing short of meteoric; twenty-five years ago it was a newcomer, and as such perhaps should have been taken more seriously by the likes of Leyland. Now, as is well-known, it has absorbed Leyland and dominates the overall bus and coach market here.

Although it had an involvement in the front-engined Ailsa, which later became a fully-fledged Volvo model, most of the company's success was based on the mid underfloor-engine concept. In the press information issued at the B7L's launch, Volvo claimed to be the first with a mid-engined chassis in 1950, though historians could easily blow that claim out of the water — indeed some of the technology which made that move possible came from Leyland, which was already building its underfloor-engined Royal Tiger and Olympic at the time, and even they were not exactly pioneers. But for a good deal of its existence Volvo was firmly wedded to the concept of a mid, underfloor engine, using its highly successful 9.6 litre turbocharged unit. The B58, with which Volvo spearheaded its success in the UK, was succeeded by the largely similar B10M, which went on to be probably the most successful PSV chassis of all time. It still forms the basis of many coaches here, but its days as a service bus are now coming to an end, due to its inability to provide a low-floor alternative.



Taking a step backwards

Now Volvo is convinced of the benefits of rear engines, and its new B7L range not only dispenses of the trusty 9.6 litre engine in favour of something much smaller, it also ditches the horizontal engine concept. It's perhaps ironic that earlier generations found the horizontal engine a useful way of getting the thing out of the way of passengers (and for all its political incorrectness in the present generation, the B10M — and other mid-engined chassis — could produce a flat interior floor and uncluttered interior which has never been matched by any other bus type) now that entrance heights have been lowered and steps eliminated the horizontal engine now gets in the way. So many attempts have been made to make a

horizontal engine fit under a low-floor bus; none has been entirely successful. The simplest, such as the Volvo B10BLE, create a step aft of the rear axle; others, like the B10L, offset the engine so that a full-length step-free gangway is possible but with footstools necessary, and in the case of the Mercedes O.405N you finish up with a ramp towards the rear of the bus which exceeds the maximum angle specified by DiPTAC by a considerable margin.

It has been obvious from the start that new approaches to driveline are essential, and perhaps the development of hybrid drives will achieve this. Mercedes is going down this road with its little Cito, using diesel-electric drive, though those who have travelled on it tell us it's not yet very happy on hills. And hydrostatics, as used by DAB on its revolutionary Travelator, are complicated and not yet entirely trusted.

Tucking a compact vertical engine away to one side, using a conventional driveline, is perhaps the most attractive answer until hybrid drive really comes good. Van Hool was first off the mark, using a mid-mounted vertical engine to one side (AEC knew a bit about this in the early-1930s!) while both DAF and now Volvo have moved the engine to the rear corner.

New engines for a new era

Busmen are steadily having to accept new thinking. When bus companies employed engineers to any extent, the perceived logic that a large, relatively simple engine understressed and giving lots of torque without having to rev very high was one which worked. Something in the region of 10 litres was the norm, even given that such units were quite happy running in trucks at twice the gross vehicle weight of a bus. But low fuel costs and prodigious mileages between overhauls proved the theory to be sound. A Gardner engine in the 1930s could give fuel consumption and torque characteristics still unsurpassed. It also had the ability to fill an entire bus garage with a blue fog on a cold morning and did not always represent the last word in refinement for the passenger.

Now the power output of such engines is being far outstripped by much smaller units. Even the requirement for low-speed torque — so essential to achieve good performance on stop-start work — can now be met with much smaller units. This in turn takes weight out of the vehicle and enables engines to be tucked away in a smaller space. It's often thought that the side-mounted rear engine cannot work because the Bristol VRL didn't work. But that was developed more than 30 years ago using conventional engine technology; a big, heavy, 10-litre engine was bound to cause a weight imbalance. A smaller, seven-litre engine used in the same way is less of a problem.

For the B7L the engine is derived from the seven-litre unit fitted in the B7R coach; in the B7R the D7 unit is mechanically controlled and has a volume of 6.7 litres. That for the B7L citybus is larger in terms of swept volume, at 7.3 litres and features an advanced electronic engine management system. Apart from any other considerations, this makes a physical connection unnecessary between the accelerator pedal and the engine, which is handy when building a low-floor bus, but it is also a contributory factor in the ability of the engine to give lower emissions. Electronic control can give much more precise timing and volume of fuel injection for optimum combustion. It also allows the engine's systems to be integrated with other electronic control systems on the bus, such as gearbox functions and antilock braking. It also gives engine protection; for example it limits engine speed until oil has been circulated to all lubricating points and cuts down fuelling if the engine overheats. In addition to the inherently cleaner running produced by electronics and other engine developments, such as a high compression ratio of 19.5:1 and new combustion chamber design, a catalytic converter and a particulate filter can be specified as factory-fitted options.

As noted last month, four power ratings are available, 210bhp, 250bhp, 290bhp and 310bhp, with the last standard on articulated versions. Torque on the 210bhp version is 900Nm (664lbf/ft) over a range from 1,000-1,650rpm, while the 310bhp version produces 1,350Nm, or nearly 1,000lbf/ft, at 1,200rpm. Latest-generation electronically controlled ZF and Voith fully-automatic gearboxes are offered. The cooling system is mounted on top of the engine; this reduces the amount of floor space needed for it and reduces dirt ingress. It uses a thermostatically-controlled mechanical fan.

Interestingly the D7C will be Volvo's last new diesel engine of this size; it has a collaborative deal with Deutz which will develop all engines below eight litres for Volvo, leaving Volvo to concentrate on larger engines, in the eight to 16 litre bracket.

Above left:

The Volvo D7C engine close coupled in this case to a ZF gearbox, though Voith is also available. Access to the gearbox once a body is put on it looks as if it might be a problem.

Low-floor chassis

Volvo had announced some time ago that it intended to use independent front suspension on all its low-floor models, and to this extent the B7L is no exception. The front suspension is derived from that already in use on the B10L and B10BLE. It also has disc brakes at the front.

The chassis version is a short-wheelbase unit, suitable for splitting by bodybuilders, and this and the complete bodied versions — the 5000, which has aluminium bodywork, and the 7000 which has stainless steel — feature a virtually flat floor from front to rear. At the entrance and centre door floor height is 320mm and rises to 345mm at the rear door. The rear door is for continental three-door buses; it is opposite the engine, which will be on the nearside on righthand drive vehicles. Kneeling brings the front of the bus down to 230mm. The flat floor is claimed to allow plenty of room for standees, in addition to its other benefits; a 12m Continental three-door bus can accommodate more than 100 passengers, admittedly in conditions unlikely to be tolerated by British passengers.

The design of the rear axle enables the gangway to be flat throughout; it is a dropped-centre unit with the differential moved as far as possible to the (UK) nearside. The driveshaft is at 80° to the axle to clear the double rear tyres.

Whether the bodied versions will reach the UK is not entirely clear, but a Volvo spokesman confirmed that Volvo is currently in discussion with UK bodybuilders. It is expected that the first B7Ls in Britain will be in service by the end of 1999; FirstGroup's articulated versions will be amongst the first. In the short term at least the B10L and B10BLE will continue to be produced alongside the B7L, though Volvo expects demand for these to tail off to the point where the B7L replaces them altogether. Production for Northern Europe will be at Borås, in Sweden, with the plant in Wrocław, Poland, building B7L and 5000s and 7000s for Eastern and Southern Europe.

Double-deck solutions

As we announced last month ('News'), Volvo, like DAF and Dennis, has concluded that it would be impracticable to offer an in-line engine for double-decker use in the UK. The majority of new double-deckers will be required for London where the street pattern and traffic density has proved a need for shorter buses over and over again. Thus a specific double-decker version of the B7L has been

developed, using the same driveline mounted transversely across the rear of the bus.

The front part will be identical to other versions of the B7L, though it manages to use the same rear axle, complete with the 80° input, with the input offset to the right rather than the left, as the engine, complete with cooling system, will be mounted to the offside. The rear end structure is quite different however, and uses an Olympian-style perimeter frame which can be integrated into the body structure.

It is understood that a separate model is to be announced for the Hong Kong market at the UITP City Transport exhibition there in October. This will be a three-axle model, but as yet no more is known. Dennis has shown with the Trident that an in-line engine will work on a 12m double-decker, so it is possible that the B7L's usual in-line driveline could be fitted. However with loadings of up to 170 passengers, requirements for air conditioning and some formidable hills, there are likely to be questions in Hong Kong about the suitability of a 7.3 litre engine if this is what Volvo intends to offer; Dennis uses the 11 litre Cummins M11 in the Hong Kong Trident rather than the 8.3 litre Cummins

C-series in its forthcoming two-axle version.

Volvo is currently rationalising its production to use common components as far as possible in as many different applications as possible. The B7L is conceived in line with this philosophy; it is very much a single family capable of multifarious roles. Volvo maintains it will keep the B10BLE and B10L in production as long as there is a demand, but it seems likely that for all full-size citybus requirements the B7L will be the sole Volvo offering before very much longer.

Below right:

In addition to the B7L chassis, Volvo is offering two complete vehicles, using the same underframe — this is the stainless steel 7000. Styling is similar to the Säffle body on the B10L.

Below:

A slightly fanciful impression of the B7L double-decker.



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BFILL03

GIVE US

By refusing to allow breaks of journey and not offering comprehensive through tickets, bus operators could be turning away custom and sowing the seeds of further decline in the future, argues RHODRI CLARK

The bus industry has seen great changes over recent years, including advances in vehicle design and productivity. Ticketing technology has also developed. Tickets can now show where and when a passenger boarded, the destination requested and other information. The fares policy, however, has not evolved. Passengers, more often than not, have the same choice of single or return tickets, with the same conditions of carriage, as they would have been offered 30 years ago. Now, as then, passengers may not normally break their journeys or book a ticket which is valid on different routes.

A matter of convenience

The upshot is that bus travel is often inflexible and expensive for a series of local journeys. Equally damaging is the implication of these rigid ticket rules — that the operator is running the service to suit itself. A company that does not allow a change of buses when that would suit the paying customer may make passengers change buses when that suits the operator. In today's consumer-driven society, such an attitude can be commercially suicidal. In the bus industry it helps deprive operators of revenue they might otherwise gain from people who can choose between modes of transport.

The industry needs to wake up to the fact that today's young people — potential customers now and in the future — grow up in a climate where everything is available at their convenience. Satellite television, video players, fast food, microwave ovens, the Internet, cash-point machines and shops open all week are the norm to them. The private car could be added to that list, as it is available at all times of day or night and is flexible enough to suit all kinds of journey.

In such an age, the restrictions on validity of bus tickets are anachronistic. Having paid what they regard as a fairly high price (relative to the apparent costs of driving) for a return ticket, young customers would expect at least the option of breaking their journeys.

Other ticket restrictions arise because operators do not view their services as forming a network. It normally suits them for passengers to stick to individual routes, and passengers are financially penalised if they use multiple routes.

Changing patterns

Many bus systems radiate from the centres of large towns or cities and cater adequately for journeys from outlying settlements to the main centre. Recent decades have seen the edges of settlements used for new developments — supermarkets and leisure centres being obvious examples. Bus passengers may also need to reach hospitals, schools, colleges, cinemas, football stadiums and other facilities that are not within walking distance of the town or city centre.

Bus operators have almost excluded themselves from this huge source of travel demand by their outmoded ticketing practices. Few, if any, offer ordinary tickets between any two points on their own system, let alone a wide range of through-booking options involving other operators. Instead the customer using more than one route must rebook, at considerable expense.

The almost universal ban on breaking bus journeys also contributes to the unsuitability of buses for accessing edge-of-town sites, perhaps on return from a city or town centre. Tills set aside for five or fewer items demonstrate that not all shoppers at supermarkets buy carboot-fulls of provisions. The supermarket is not always the destination of a single-purpose journey but may be a stop-off point on a journey to or from somewhere else; cars

allow people to take such flexibility for granted yet bus operators do not acknowledge it.

The extra cost of rebooking when crossing a town or city is illustrated where radial routes have been linked to form useful corridors that thread from one side to the other, via the centre. On such a route the cost of booking direct from A to B, via town centre C, might be 60% of the cost of two tickets, for A to C and C to B. It would be impractical to operate through routes for every journey permutation and through services are often only a fraction of the services on which it is possible to travel from A to B (with a change at C if needed).

Passengers starting out from home may well be able to organise their travel to leave A on a through service to B but, having finished their business at B, they might find themselves with a comparatively long wait for the next through bus. Several buses on routes which terminate at C may pass the waiting passenger — but most bus operators will not permit a passenger in this situation to use the return portion of a ticket on two separate buses, via a change at C, even where both would use the same roads as the through bus.

Consequently companies restrict passengers to the half-hourly or hourly frequency of the through services, instead of an attractive turn-up-and-go service. If the passenger's business at B continues into the evening, the through services may well have finished for the day by the time the return journey begins. Many operators expect passengers in this situation to pay extra for the privilege of catching two



A BREAK!

buses home (possibly with a lengthy wait at the central bus station to boot) — this in a society where people are used to paying less for goods or services which are inferior.

Conditions of carriage normally state that ordinary tickets do not allow breaks of journey. Changing buses at C — stepping off one and on to the other within seconds or minutes — arguably does not constitute a break of journey, as the journey progresses uninterrupted. It would be interesting to see this argued in court, but the pennies at stake to an individual passenger would not justify the risk of paying lawyers' fees! It is also possible that, if the passenger won the case, bus companies would amend their conditions of carriage to preclude changes rather than allow them.

Fixed track, flexible practice

The distinction between breaking journeys and changing services is well understood on the rail system. Conditions for the SuperSaver ticket, one of the most widely used tickets in Britain, do not allow the outward journey to be broken, but passengers may change trains on the outward leg if this is necessary or even just convenient.

The rail system offers a model of a flexible ticketing system for any bus operator who cares to look (and indeed highlights the contrast between the ticket policies of some major transport companies on their rail franchises and on their buses). Rail's ticketing system is more advanced than would be needed or practicable for bus operators; the rail passenger's freedom to book between any stations in Britain is supported by a complex, and occasionally acrimonious, procedure for sharing revenue between operators.

Crucially, though, passengers still perceive the rail system as a network. If their destination does not lie on the direct route from their home station, it is a simple matter to change services en route. They may not be allowed to break their outward journeys but it is often easy to visit two or three places on one ordinary ticket, by breaking the return journey. The rail system operates over longer distances than bus networks, but the same principles could be applied within the territory of any multi-route bus operator.

The basic difference between the two is that rail companies have overcome their fear of fraud and are reaping the rewards, just as shopkeepers have overcome their fear of theft from shops where the goods are accessible to customers instead of kept behind a counter.

Bus firms are afraid that inviting changes of bus and breaks of journey would open the floodgates for misuse of tickets, sending revenue into a nosedive. They may feel that the ticketing technology in use today does not include safeguards against fraud. This seems a tenuous argument when the information printed on a rail ticket is compared with that on a modern bus ticket. Both give the same basic information, including origin and destination, date and time of issue and ticket type.

The scope to exploit fraudulently a break-of-journey option applicable on the return leg is small (arguably smaller than the scope for passengers to make longer journeys than they have paid for). The number of people dishonest enough to abuse the break-of-journey option for the sake of a fraction of a bus fare while also being in a position to find that useful is probably negligible. If some revenue was lost through allowing changes of bus and breaks of journey, that loss would surely be outweighed by the extra revenue that

would accrue from a flexible and user-friendly system.

The bus industry is not without its flexible tickets. Season tickets allow freedom of movement on a single corridor, including use of multiple routes if necessary. Most bus firms offer rover tickets. At £4.80 a One-Day Explorer from Arriva Cymru allows unlimited travel across the company's vast network, while First Cymru's cheapest day-rover ticket, at £4, covers a large area around Swansea. Such tickets offer excellent value for anybody intending to make a fair number of bus journeys but are not a substitute for flexibility within the standard range of return and single tickets. A £4 ticket may be expensive to anyone who travels, say, twice a week or with a family. The £1.60 they might be used to paying for a return ticket already looks steep compared with the cost, real or perceived, of travelling by car (which offers flexibility at no extra cost). If they must pay substantially more to gain freedom of movement by bus they are less likely to buy a rover-type ticket than to engineer travel by car, perhaps by arranging their business around periods when a car is available.

One practical alternative for British bus firms, especially in cities, could be time-limit tickets, used elsewhere in Europe. These allow unlimited travel for a period (often two hours) from the time of issue, are easily understood by the public and are cheaper than day-rover tickets.

Bus operators may feel flexibility of travel is an option that few of their current passengers request, but the issue is arguably significant to the industry's long-term future. As the distance between facilities continues to grow, partly because of a planning system and society that remains wedded to car culture, the bus industry must offer competitively priced transport between scattered sites or face an increasingly marginal and irrelevant future.

Opposite:
A simple change to ticket validity could make bus stations function as interchanges rather than terminuses and allow passengers easy and cheap access to the growing number of facilities outside town centres. This is Blackwood, with vehicles of Islwyn Borough Transport and Glyn Williams in evidence.

RHODRI CLARK

Left:
Inflexible ticketing may be one of the factors that deters young people — who take fast food, cashpoint machines and satellite TV for granted — from travelling by bus.

RHODRI CLARK



GLASGOW'S ATLANTEANS

A final farewell?

Although it is some months since the end of Glasgow's Atlanteans was officially commemorated, they have refused to lie down and die quietly. And why should they? They never did anything else quietly . . . But ALAN MILLAR hasn't seen any for a week or two, so we think we're now safe to let him eulogise on this unsung Glaswegian icon

Within weeks of returning to live in the city of my birth last December, I got a foretaste of how Londoners will feel when the Routemaster finally dies. After almost 40 years, an integral part of the Glasgow street scene started disappearing with extraordinary haste and little public recognition as First Glasgow began to withdraw its last Leyland Atlanteans.

I suppose I'm really talking as much about street sound as scene, for the Atlantean's most distinctive characteristic is the loud roar of 11 litres of Leyland O.680 diesel, the 1950s technology of a Pneumocyclic gearbox and probably even older designs of brake drums being propelled between tall city centre grid-built buildings or let loose in the outer suburbs.

Through my formative years in the city, another 20 years of frequent return visits and again the first days back living here, the Atlanteans' roar has been as much part of my Glasgow as the Victorian architecture, the River Clyde or the unmistakable dialect.

These buses were the modern age wonders that I craved to ride in to school when Glasgow Corporation's exposed radiator Regent IIIs seemed ten a penny. And they survived long enough to become essential backdrops to innumerable episodes of Scottish Television's *Taggart*, reminding then exiles like me of the city's character. One was a central prop in the film *Carla's Song* a couple of years ago, driven around and beyond the city by Robert Carlyle before *The Full Monty* and Sheffield made him more famous. And only the other day, I found a city art gallery shop selling a Beryl Cook greetings card with a fine representation of a Glasgow Atlantean passing by. That little souvenir now graces our loo wall.

But save for some driver trainers, the real things have gone — replaced, courtesy of FirstGroup's profits and shareholders, by around 250 mainly single-deck Volvos, Dennises and Scania in corporate pastel 'Barbie' colours.

The newcomers are fine buses and I realised, each time I witnessed another 18 or 19-year-old Atlantean rumbling through one of its last working shifts, that their day had passed. They could almost be accused of over-staying their welcome for when the last were delivered in September 1981, Strathclyde PTE — which then operated the city fleet — was on course to sell them around 1990; those Atlanteans arrived as SPTE prepared to replace Atlanteans which themselves had replaced Atlanteans and none of its buses was more than nine years old. The city's population has shrunk further since then and, with an at least occasionally observed smoking ban, there is less need for heavy, expensive-to-maintain double-deckers on every route.

But why be rational? Atlanteans were among the few constant threads to run through four decades of enormous changes for Glaswegians. They've been around while densely-populated inner city tenement



Gloucester Road, Glasgow
December 2001
DAVID MCKEE
LA1122 stands outside the
twisted prams and red ash
bins that once were
densely populated.
The year was 1977.
ALAN MILLAR



districts have been erased along with the streets that defined them. Familiar theatres, cinemas, department stores, railway stations, docks, factories and schools have vanished; motorways, city centre shopping malls, drive-in superstores, financial services call centres and a mosque are just some of the new sights to rise from the scenes of 1960s and 1970s demolition.

Atlanteans just predated the end of Glasgow's trams in 1962 and went on to despatch its trolleybuses by 1967. As a breed, they've lasted more than twice as long as the trolleys and substantially longer than the streamlined Coronation and Cunarder cars bought over the last 25 years of the tram system. So their end is a significant watershed in the public transport history of one of Britain's major cities.

Atlantean pioneer

The tale of the 1,449 Atlanteans bought new by Glasgow Corporation Transport and Greater Glasgow/Strathclyde PTE — and

another 52 bought secondhand by Strathclyde Buses in the 1990s — goes back to 1958. As a big city running high capacity trams and trolleybuses, Glasgow was in the front of the queue to invest £6,150 in one of the first of Leyland's rear-engined 78-seaters. LA1, fresh from the Earls Court commercial motor show with Alexander's first-ever body for a back-to-front double-decker, was only the second (or possibly the third — no-one seems absolutely sure when James of Ammanford put its one into service) PDR1/1 Atlantean anywhere to go into revenue-earning service when it took to the road on 15 December that year on suburban route 26 from Govan to Priesthill. It was later let loose through the city centre on the 4 from Drumoyne to Balornock, a route partially revived in 1998 as the last Atlanteans, by chance, disappeared.

LA1 was like no bus ordinary Glaswegians had ever seen before. But its looks turned more than just heads. The slab of unstyled steel that passed for a 1958 Atlantean upset the stomachs or curdled the tea drunk by corporation officials and elected representatives so much that, when the first of a big batch of 200 arrived four years later, industrial styling of the tailfin era had seen to it that they looked a lot more interesting.

Curved glass, glass fibre mouldings and a refusal to accept that bus design should simply evolve and be ultra-functional created the 'Glasgow look' — a changed appearance as radical as Leyland's idea of swapping the positions of the platform and engine. It was the inspiration for a movement to give rear-engined double-deckers the body styles they deserved, and early Glasgow Atlanteans became ambassadors, borrowed by Leyland to woo transport authorities in such places as Coventry and Dublin. The 90th of that first 200, LA91, was bought back by Leyland as a full-time demonstrator, most probably before it reached Glasgow.

As LA364 was followed by LA365 in 1967,

the chassis graduated from O.600 Powerplus engine to O.680 and nine years of unimaginatively green-painted metal interiors gave way to slightly more imaginative green plastic. Most of the first 600 differed from just about every other Atlantean on the planet as, instead of the badge showing Atlas holding the globe, they carried oval Albion badges inside the Leyland shield — a gesture that pretended these Lancastrian buses were somehow Glaswegian.

One-manning

With around 450 Atlanteans by 1969, GCT had a readily adaptable resource as it began to dispense with conductors. Against a difficult background of national pay negotiations and government-imposed prices and incomes controls, experimental one-man operation of single-deckers had begun in 1965. At the end of 1968, it still only had agreement to run a maximum of three omo duties — and this truly was one-man-operation as GCT had few women drivers — using a pool of seven buses, three of them Atlanteans with fully-automatic gearboxes. Thirty years on, the bus industry has become a lot more efficient.

Two of those Atlanteans were modified in GCT's workshops with enlarged cabs, periscopes, reversing lamps hauled out of a headlamp parts bin for discarded Regent IIIs, and such a multiplicity of signwriting that only the most myopic or unobservant passengers might still expect a conductor to come looking for fares.

Top:

One Atlantean, LA1440, acquired white First Glasgow fleetnames and red livery for its last weeks of service. This was Union Street in July 1998.

ALAN MILLAR

Above left:

Atlanteans helped Glasgow convert its routes to one-man operation in the late-1960s and 1970s. LA354 of 1967 is seen here in Corporation days, complete with the orange dot on the roof dome which was supposed to identify omo vehicles. While this is the real thing, the dots couldn't be removed when conductors were carried, so the practice was soon dropped.

MURDOCH CURRIE

Bottom left:

The one that started it all. 1958 pre-production prototype LA1 (FYS 998) was already preserved by 1978 when it participated in a parade and open day organised by Greater Glasgow PTE. It is in the livery style adopted by Glasgow Corporation during 1959, but was the only Atlantean painted in the previous style with more equal areas of green, cream and orange.

MURDOCH CURRIE



The third, dual-doored LA422, was the first Glasgow double-decker designed from the outset for one-man operation and the first with a 2.5 metre wide body. It was the prototype for another 286 two-door Atlanteans, a layout neither appreciated nor much used by either the travelling public or the city's bus drivers.

The reality was that fare collection — using prehistoric five-roll Ultimate ticket machines and trays of loose change — determined dwell times at stops far more than the volume of passengers trying to get off. Added to that, I imagine a persuasive whizz-kid door control salesman had convinced GCT that the whitest heat of moonshot technology lay in an unhelpful system which kept the exit doors firmly shut until the front doors opened — and even then only allowed the exit door to open if someone pressed the bell.

You could see their undoing every day. Passengers went dutifully to the middle door. The bus stopped. The door stayed shut. The driver shouted back something in frustrated deepest Glaswegian about pressing the bell. But by then the front doors opened and impatient passengers leaped off to freedom while the next load ploughed aboard and an interlock stopped the bus moving again until after the exit doors closed.

As if that cocktail wasn't trouble enough, a new generation of death-defying street-playing children — deprived of moving coal lorries to cling to as smoke control zones spread city-wide — dared each other to ride 'hugie' on the handrails that Construction & Use regulations demanded be placed either side of the exit doorway. These children didn't always defy death.

Yet a combination of optimism and inertia kept two-door Atlanteans coming off

Alexander's production lines until the autumn of 1973. The PTE's workshops were busy for the next few years as they ripped most of them out again and put in extra seats.

A futile attempt to solve the fare collection problem came in 1970 when a now mercifully forgotten self-service ticket machine called the Bell Autoslot replaced a seat in 16 two-door Atlanteans. Most passengers continued to pay the driver and probably only noticed the red Autoslots as they queued to get out by the entrance door.

Getting steamed up

And these weren't the only Atlantean drawbacks, for being in the vanguard of the rear-engined revolution didn't always put Glasgow Corporation on top of the technology. As the late-1960s boiled into the early 1970s, ever larger mesh grilles were cut into the sides and backs of Atlanteans as engineers fought a losing battle against overheating engines. The mesh grilles vanished after a bright young man called Alan Westwell, Dublin Bus's managing director today, first arrived in Glasgow in 1972 as chief engineer and began to tackle causes rather than symptoms.

Yet the Atlantean seemed unassailable. It saw off the early challenge of a Fleetline that Daimler persuaded GCT to buy in 1963, the purchase of 36 Leyland Panther and National single-deckers in the 1960s and 1970s, and it withstood the more formidable threat posed by 58 Metropolitans and Ailsas in 1974/75 — as much because Alan Westwell, the brains behind buying them and a man who saw insuperable limitations in Atlantean technology, left

Glasgow for Tayside for five years when more orders might have been placed. Five Metrobuses came a little later and the Leyland Titan, which was meant to replace the Atlantean in the mid-1970s, was kept out of the picture by a series of setbacks.

Evolution

Atlanteans evolved as they kept on flooding in. The switch to AN68 and Alexander's squarer AL body in 1972 (LA601) was followed by GGPTE's move on to panoramic windows in November 1973 (LA751). Bus grants and the PTE's urge to modernise saw the notable landmark of the 1,000th Atlantean being reached two years later — except that the bus known as LA1000 ought really to have been LA987 because the real LA1000 couldn't be finished in time and Lord Stokes of Leyland could hardly be persuaded to unveil a commemorative plaque for the 987th Atlantean at the Scottish Motor Show.

Panoramic windows may have looked good on the 601 Atlanteans that got them (one slightly older fire-damaged AN68 was rebodied in 1974), but they caused untold bother. It took a long time for anyone to realise how much damage was caused when a flexing chassis and an apparently inadequately supported body thumped daily over potholed roads, but the message had penetrated by the end of 1979. The last 99 Atlanteans came with short windows.

The PTE's irrepressible coachbuilders rectified body weaknesses with a range of modifications, some more visible than others. But as the sheer volume of their task became apparent, it was decided to sell the worst vehicles and keep the oldest surviving Atlanteans running indefinitely. Some ended up lasting for 22 or 23 years, long after five and six-year-olds went off by the hundred to scrapyards or to other operators prepared to take the risk. London Country bought more than 30 to meet an urgent need for double-deckers on London Transport contracts, but didn't keep them terribly long. By 1987, getting on for half of the big-windowed Atlanteans had left Glasgow.

And ever stranger things were happening. Atlanteans had been in the forefront of unfamiliar developments for a dozen years, appearing in increasingly garish advertising liveries, as city tour buses from 1975 — a role in which this ubiquitous type truly helped Glaswegians begin to renew their pride in the city's history and treasures — and a couple of accident-damaged AN68s became open-toppers.

But this was tame. Strathclyde needed midibuses in the last years before Dennis invented the Dart, and there wasn't a lot on offer that many operators actually wanted. So eight Atlanteans with panoramic windows had their top decks hacked off and their stairs ripped out to create 31 and 35-seat heavy duty midis; some were farmed

out to rural operators for services demanding better buses than they, apparently, could afford to buy for themselves.

Indian Summer

This was the start of the Glasgow Atlanteans' Indian Summer. The single-deckers themselves didn't last long in what still was a double-deck city, but the already slowing pace of fleet renewal ground to a virtual halt as Strathclyde Buses took over the PTE's services in 1986 and faced the threat of death by 100 Scottish Bus Group Routemasters bought to compete on prime city routes.

It fell to the 400 surviving Atlanteans, as much as anything else, to fight back on new routes thrusting beyond the city into surrounding towns that hadn't seen a 'Corporation' service for years, if ever. They helped win a war that saw the Routemasters retreat with their tails between their legs — or more aptly their open platforms kicked firmly between the cogs of their hydraulic gearboxes.

New Volvo Citybuses and MCW Metrobuses slowly took their toll of ageing AN68s, but not so as you would notice. Then destiny intervened. On the night of 18 May 1992, fire swept through part of Larkfield depot, destroying 11 Atlanteans and 49 newer vehicles. Olympians were ordered to replace them, but while it waited, Strathclyde Buses hired in and bought secondhand.

The Atlantean fleet grew again, with 34 bought from Busways and Nottingham. Three years later, as Stagecoach planned one of its assaults on the Glasgow bus market, 14 more secondhand Atlanteans arrived, ex-Mainline and Kingston-upon-Hull. There was talk of pitching them against Stagecoach in Fife and Perth, but the threatened war was stopped at the eleventh hour and the Atlanteans went into the recently acquired Kelvin Central Buses fleet in Lanarkshire and Dunbartonshire. Ex-PTE Atlanteans joined them in KCB's red and cream.

The secondhand acquisitions added unfamiliar shapes to a familiar chassis — Roe, Marshall, East Lancs, peaked dome and 33ft Alexander bodies with such delights on some as nearside and centre staircases. KCB's colours provided yet another mix of hues to the permutations of green, yellow, orange, white, black and cream applied since 1958.

Following the company's sale to its employees in 1993, a low-cost unit was created, self-indulgently called GCT and given yet another green/black/yellow livery; this was well-stocked with Atlanteans allocated their own GLA fleetnumbers. And even as the new GCT was wound down in 1997, odd Atlanteans were painted in the new all-over red — along with a quartet transferred from Aberdeen. Towards the

TEN THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT GLASGOW'S ATLANTEANS

- 1,501 were built for or bought secondhand by Glasgow Corporation and its successors over 39 years. Over 65 years, the city owned just 90 more electric trams.
- LA1's chassis number, 582374, made it the third production Atlantean. It was the first released from Leyland's factory, but Wallasey No1 (chassis 582372) went into service seven days earlier, on 8 December 1958. LA1 operated from Ibrox and Knightswood garages, was never converted for one-man operation and became a driver trainer in 1973, before being preserved.
- LA1 (FYS 998) and LA161 (SGD 740) were the last buses allocated registrations in GCT's exclusive series. SGD 740 would have been followed by the rest of the series up to SGD 949 had year suffixes not been introduced in Glasgow in 1964. SGD 950-99 were support vehicles. Of the other 1,288 bought new with year suffix registrations, there were 81 Bs, 60 Cs, 20 Ds, 42 Es, 57 Fs, 37 Gs, 50 Hs, 42 Js, 50 Ks, 110 Ls, 115 Ms, 125 Ns, 100 Ps, 135 Rs, 65 Ss, 60 Ts, 40 Vs, 92 Ws and seven Xs. None matched the fleetnumbers.
- LA4 was the first 'production' Atlantean delivered to Glasgow on 17 August 1962. LA20 took part in the last tram procession a month later, on 4 September.
- Apart from LA1, five other Glasgow Atlanteans were exhibited inside motor shows. LA284 was at the IVA Munich international transport exhibition in 1965 and LA465 (1969), LA574 (1971), LA751 (1973) and LA1000 (1975) were at Scottish Motor Shows. LA751 also participated in a Glasgow Week in Hamburg in 1974.
- LA230 of 1964 was Scotland's first overall advertisement bus. It entered service in Barclaycard livery on 9 March 1972.
- LA322 of 1966, the second Atlantean converted for one-man operation, had a Voith gearbox fitted after delivery. This was removed in 1974. LA362 of 1967, the first GCT Atlantean converted for one-man operation, was one of a handful with fully-automatic Self-Changing Gears transmission.
- LA695 was the last bus delivered to Glasgow Corporation before takeover by Greater Glasgow PTE on 1 June 1973.
- LA1448 was the last new Atlantean supplied to Strathclyde PTE on 25 September 1981. It is being preserved.
- Eighteen LA fleetnumbers were used twice. LA538-51, originally on two-door 1971 PDR1A/1s, were used again for ex-Mainline and Hull AN68s bought in 1995. LA1450-3, first used for East Lancs-bodied ex-Nottingham buses bought after the Larkfield fire, were revived in 1997 for 1980 buses transferred from Aberdeen.

end, orange survivors gained white First Glasgow fleetnames, so even as it prepared for its swansong, the Atlantean kept up appearances.

A protracted farewell

And like the late Frank Sinatra or Scotland's Sir Harry Lauder, it became addicted to the idea of its own farewell concerts. The word of the wise at First Glasgow was that they would all be gone by 31 March. But the need to repaint many of the newest buses into 'Barbie' colours kept the Atlanteans rumbling on past that deadline and beyond a mooted anniversary final run in May.

That quiet salute eventually took place on 6 June, but not quite as planned. Someone, it seems, mistakenly allowed LA1449 to be despatched for scrap. So the commemorative service — on a Saturday as wet as the last tram and last trolleybus days — had to settle for LA1448, the highest-numbered survivor of the fleet bought new, along with preserved LA1 in 1960s corporation colours, big-windowed LA1285 with Strathclyde Buses fleetnames restored and LA1440 in red with the latest First Glasgow lettering.

Even that wasn't the end. Less evident than before, native Glasgow survivors soldiered on through July, August and finally into September, often on cross-city routes. One even appeared in television news footage on the day the government published the Scottish version of its transport White Paper.

In many respects, the Atlanteans' career represented the best and worst of four

decades of Glasgow's bus service — the innovation and optimism, the trials, tribulations and apparent incompetence. But without them, I suspect matters could have been many times worse, for they made the rapid extension of one-man operation practical nearly 30 years ago when that was deemed essential; and the survival of the last few hundred helped Strathclyde Buses buy time when new buses were out of the question.

And they ought to be missed. Should you now stand on Glasgow's street corners, something might seem out of place. There is a void. The impenetrable cries of evening newspaper vendors are still impenetrable, but they're no longer competing against accelerating O.680s or howling brake drums. If you do succeed in penetrating their message, I'd like to believe they're announcing the end of an Atlantean era that's gone and is unlikely ever to return.

Typical of the short-lived two-door fleet, Corporation-liveried LA635 and LA560 are seen side-by-side in Gorbals Street within the first two years of PTE ownership. LA635 was a 1972 AN68 with Alexander AL body, LA560 a 1971 PDR1A/1 with J-type body.
ALAN MILLAR

VARIO- ATIONS On A Theme

A NEW GENERATION IN WORCESTER

Back in 1985 National Bus Company was making history. Its response to the forthcoming challenge of deregulation was to convert many of its urban services from low-frequency big buses to high-frequency minibuses. The big one at the time was Worcester; Exeter, where it all began, had seen piecemeal conversion of services to Ford Transits — after all with such radical pioneering work it would have been risky to change the entire city to minibuses overnight. Weston-super-Mare had seen an influx of Ford Transits too. But in Worcester it was decided to go for the 'big bang'; no fewer than 60 minibuses of a type new to NBC replaced the entire local bus fleet in the city overnight on 23 November 1985.

The operator was Midland Red West and the buses were larger than previous NBC minibuses. They were Mercedes-Benz 608Ds. These had two-plus-one seating giving a total seating capacity of 20, and they transformed the city's bus service. They penetrated housing estates where Leyland Nationals would have been out of place. They worked on a hail-&-ride basis outside the city centre and frequencies were of the sort where you could throw the timetable away. Bus travel was suddenly made easier, and if all those minibuses running every few minutes were only carrying up to 20 passengers each, then they weren't carrying many fewer than the Leyland Nationals they replaced at much lower frequencies.

Above right:

The first of First Midland Red's new Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes Varios, 501 (R501 CNP) in Worcester in September.

Right:

A later example of the type, 536 (S536 RWP). The Plaxton Beaver 2/Vario combination, with FirstGroup standard interior, is the current FirstGroup standard minibus, though a batch of Optare Solos is imminent. Being low-floor these will qualify for FirstGroup livery; Varios are being delivered in local fleet liveries.

PICTURES BY STEPHEN MORRIS

In most places the 608D has come and gone since then, replaced in the main by newer T2 Mercedes minibuses or even bigger vehicles. But in Worcester, remarkably, they have soldiered on until this year.

Now the time was right for a relaunch. Midland Red West has become part of FirstGroup, and the entire fleet was replaced at the beginning of August by 64 brand new Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814s. Officially launched on 3 August, they actually entered service the previous day, a Sunday.

These are 22-seaters, and are fully fitted out in FirstGroup trim, with high-quality Scanflex seats upholstered in standard purple moquette, with light-coloured laminates, purple flooring and aquamarine handpoles. Despite having full FirstGroup specification and, of course, Euro 2 engines, the new buses do not qualify for FirstGroup's pastel livery as they are not

low-floor. Nonetheless, being 22-seaters in a shell designed for 27 they are rather more spacious than the L608Ds, with much improved legroom, luggage accommodation and wider gangways. Thus they carry a rather attractive version of Midland Red West's traditional cream and red livery. With every bus on city services in Worcester sporting an R or S registration and the new standards of comfort provided by the FirstGroup interior, the city's buses certainly look impressive at present.



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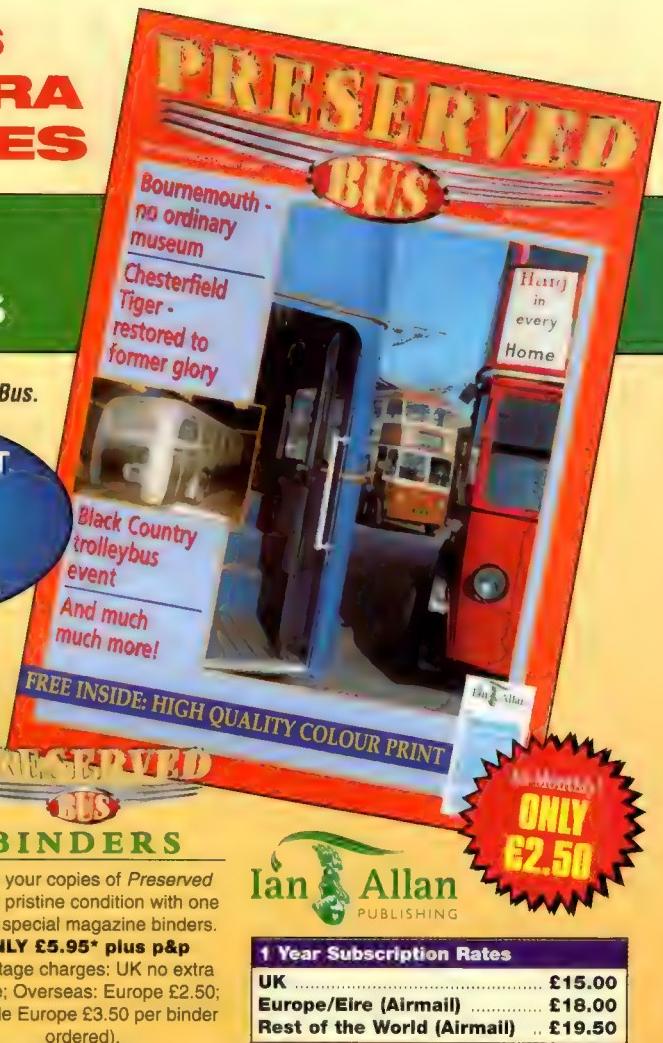
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- Mulleys of Ixworth - a well-known East Anglian operator which has been involved in various preservation projects
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Reviews

BUS REVIEW 13

BUS ENTHUSIAST PUBLISHING CO.
238mm x 167mm. 48pp PAPERBACK.
£7.50

Even if you read *Buses* avidly every month the rate of change in the industry makes it difficult for most of us to remember all the frequent changes in design, routes, companies and everything else that take place. Luckily this useful annual review can be relied on to jog the memory, and remind us of significant events whose date at least we have probably forgotten.

It follows the same regular formula with a mix of short articles on the major groups, new body and chassis designs, major events, orders, deliveries, and most useful lists of models on the UK market and who owns whom. This new edition — only just out — covers events in 1997, though you have to turn to the inside to discover this.

It is well printed on glossy paper, and contains an excellent selection of pictures in black & white and colour. The price is the same as last year, too. Its standard of accuracy is high, though it has killed off Londonlinks a year too soon. Recommended.

JOHN ALDRIDGE

GLORY DAYS: TILLING GROUP

GAVIN BOOTH. IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING LTD. 190mm x 245mm. 96pp HARDBACK.
£14.99

The wealth of bus books published these days might suggest that few topics remain to be explored. But this book breaks new ground. Its main focus is on the Tilling Group in the 1950s and 1960s, but it also covers its earlier beginnings and in particular the winding up of the Tilling & British Automobile Traction Ltd holding company in 1942, an event which arguably gave some better earning companies to the BET Group and more rural ones to the Tilling Group.

The text is divided into four main sections. One of them covers the individual companies, while another looks at the relatively standardised Tilling Group fleet which, of course, was mainly Bristol chassis with ECW bodies. The book follows the standard 'Glory Days' format with alternate pairs of pages with black and white, and colour photographs. Unfortunately the layout pays little regard to the textual content, so that one reads about Brighton Hove & District and then turns the page to pictures of Bristol and Cheltenham District vehicles. Pictures of BH&D buses and trolleybuses actually appear eight or ten pages earlier.

Pictures too are mixed with some excellent ones sometimes reproduced rather small and a few poor quality colour ones reproduced rather large. All of this is rather a shame as the book contains some useful information

MICHAEL CLEMENTS

AROUND SCOTLAND BY BUS

ROBERT GRIEVES. BUS ENTHUSIAST PUBLISHING CO. 240mm x 170mm. 128pp PAPERBACK. £11.95.

The author says this book is an attempt to redress the lack of bus books just about Scotland by picturing the scene there mainly through nostalgic eyes. It has chapters on major operators, and some smaller ones, and other chapters on some of the more interesting or scenic counties from a bus point-of-view.

There is no text as such, just pictures — usually two or three to a page — with excellent and informative captions to them. Some are absolute gems, such as the diminutive Chevrolet of SMT which more than fills the whole Dornie ferry, a small timber boat complete with turntable. We see bus crew too, such as a youthful driver and conductress of McGills with a rather elderly Albion double-decker.

One of the oldest photographs shows a Darracq et Serpollet in the station yard at Stranraer in about 1908 while the newest is of a trio of modern Leylands and one Volvo double-deckers of Strathclyde negotiating floods at Kirklee.

The pictures are absolutely splendid, the captions excellent, but unfortunately the book is printed on matt paper.

JOHN ALDRIDGE

LEYLAND ATLANTICAN

RON PHILLIPS. GINGERFOLD PUBLICATIONS. 240mm x 169mm. 48pp PAPERBACK. £7.35 inc POSTAGE.

Leyland's original Titan of 1927 and its successors have generated a number of books, but less has been produced on the Atlantean despite its significance. This new book goes some way to filling the gap, with a brief yet informative history of the development of the model, beginning with the first two 'low loading/rear-engined Titans' with their small engines. A third prototype chassis was never finished, and the two original Atlanteans built were integrals, a worthwhile idea that also had to be dropped. One of the design briefs of the 1950s was a low floor, and indeed early Atlanteans had this. I think Liverpool Corporation was the first to add a step.

The book is printed on glossy paper, and contains some 50 photographs, many of them from the archives of the British Commercial Vehicle Museum. Not all the pictures have been well reproduced. But there are some gems, such as the original prototype, 281 ATC, undergoing rebuilding, and some of the export models.

The book also benefits from access to some official papers, though such minutes can be selective. We hear of concern by the BET and Leyland management about faults with the first models, with threats of buying only Daimler Fleetliners. The book also highlights how the BET Group was the original supporter of the model, buying hundreds, while in the early days Wallasey and Plymouth Corporations were virtually the only municipal customers. By the

time of the AN68, the Passenger Transport Executives, as successors to many municipalities, had become the main buyers, in huge numbers.

The book covers the earlier Atlanteans and the greater number of model variations in more detail, with less space devoted to the later and more standardised AN68 versions. There are some useful tables listing all the low-height versions, while a further table lists the 10-metre PDR2/1 models (though not with 100% accuracy). Other appendices deal with prototypes and demonstrators. A separate chapter is devoted to single-deck versions, while two chapters cover export models, which were surprisingly numerous. Indeed, the last chassis built were for export.

The book is a useful addition to the limited material available on the Atlantean, and readably written, though not particularly cheap. Buy it if you can at a rally or swapmeet for £6.50.

MICHAEL CLEMENTS

CATCH THE BLUEBIRD

STEWART J BROWN. BUS ENTHUSIAST PUBLISHING COMPANY. 237mm x 166mm. 48pp PAPERBACK. £5.95.

The origins of today's Bluebird Buses can be traced back to a service started by the Great North of Scotland Railway between Ballater and Braemar in 1904. This book covers in words and pictures the development of services in north-east Scotland through the years as part of the great Alexander empire to today's present ownership by Stagecoach.

There are some 21 different chapters within the book, most of only two or three pages. Between them they cover most transport events in this rather remote corner of Scotland. Even the days of railway-owned buses and bus services are not skimped, with four photographs and three pages devoted to them. Postwar expansion and later decline each merit a chapter, as does the recent expansion as Bluebird Buses under Stagecoach. An interesting table compares journey times, fares and frequencies in 1947 and 1997 on five key routes: none has fewer buses, and most running times are significantly faster.

The pictures are well-chosen, ranging from a Durkopp of 1906 being rescued by horses in a snowstorm to three of buses in the steep hills and hairpin bend to Gardenstown in more recent times. Vehicles of several operators acquired by Alexander are depicted, and there are some attractive pictures and details of some of the more interesting routes in the area.

The book is printed on matt paper, but most pictures have survived surprisingly well.

MICHAEL CLEMENTS

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING, part three, ROAD TRANSPORT BOOKS.

COMPILED BY M. G. BURBAGE-ATTER.
210mm x 145mm. 48pp PAPERBACK. £5.

This lists all the books on buses and coaches, trams and trolleybuses ever produced by Ian Allan. If you collect abcs you can find out just how many editions of the abc of London Transport or Birmingham Corporation were produced, or wonder whether you have all the titles of the Heyday of the Bus, then this is the list for you. Secondhand booksellers should find it invaluable too.

JOHN ALDRIDGE

BUSES YEARBOOK 1999

Edited by STEWART J BROWN. IAN ALLAN PUBLISHING. 240mm x 177mm. 128pp. HARDBACK. £12.99.

The latest edition of this hardy annual — to use a botanical term — contains the usual fascinating mixture of articles and pictures, albeit with a slight Scottish bias. Something rather different is Alistair Douglas's Indian Interlude, complete with a fascinating selection of pictures including a double-decker articulated bus.

Peter Rowlands — inevitably — holds forth on liveries, this time looking at some of those of Arriva companies that soon will vanish. There is a Naturalist's Guide to Leopards, Leyland Leopards that is, and a look at major changes in Lancashire since deregulation. If you want an anecdote that is strangely compelling yet has genuine bus interest Robert Jowitt supplies it with a story of youthful girlfriends and travelling to the recent memorial service to the father of one. Then there is a piece about the bodybuilders who managed to survive the aftermath of deregulation and the usual short photo features. Some attractive colour pictures and numerous black and white ones are well reproduced too.

JOHN ALDRIDGE

DUPLE: 70 YEARS OF COACHBUILDING

ALAN TOWNSIN. VENTURE PUBLICATIONS. 302mm x 215mm. 168pp. HARDBACK. £19.95

This long promised, long awaited book on Duple is out at last. It has been produced in typical Townsin/Venture style, which means a high degree of accuracy coupled to a slightly pedestrian layout.

The book relates the early beginnings in Hornsey, London, and the early successes that led to a move surprisingly quickly to much larger premises in the shape of a new factory at The Hyde, Hendon. By the early 1930s the company was well established as a coach bodybuilder, though it still also built lorry and specialist car bodies. Another important contract, bearing in mind the seasonal nature of the coach business, was van bodywork for the General Post Office and Post Office Telephones.

Hugely significant in 1931 was the start of an association with General Motors in the UK, and provision of bodywork for its new Chevrolet and then Bedford chassis. By the end of 1935 it had three body designs for the new Bedford WTB, and by the outbreak of World War 2 the Bedford-Duple combination with what became the Vista body had become 'part of the language of the coach industry.' But there were many other coach bodies of varying style built on other chassis makes too.

Wartime saw production of ambulance bodies and military vehicles, parts for planes, and single and double-deck bus bodies. Postwar saw more Bedford-Duple coaches, of course, plus a variety of other body styles on full-sized chassis including the shapely A-series body.

Later developments included a variety of styles for underfloor-engined chassis and the purchase of Midlands-based Nudd Bros & Lockyer. Then in 1958 Willowbrook was bought, with the even larger H. V. Burlingham of Blackpool acquired in 1960, ultimately leading to a move away from Hendon altogether.

Over the other side of the country Plaxton was gaining ground in the coach market, and while Duple still seemed strong in the early 1980s, ten years later all had gone.

The book is copiously illustrated, though reproduction of many of the pictures is not as sharp as it should be. Surprisingly, too, there are no colour pictures, except on the covers. There is an excellent index, and the price seems reasonable by modern standards.

JOHN ALDRIDGE

MODELS

EFE 1/76th scale BRISTOL REELL

This is the one everyone has been waiting for. And has the wait been worth it? Absolutely! It may be true to say that not every EFE model has been quite spot on (both EFE and OOC struggled in particular with the MCW Orion). But where EFE has really scored has been with its London models (and an RML/RCL and DMS were shown at Showbus) and its Bristol/ECW models, all of which have been quite superb. The REELL, in this reviewer's opinion, tops the lot of them. He's of an age to have been greatly impressed by the sight of brand new REs in Tilling-style livery, and that feeling of the thrill of seeing such things was recaptured the moment he opened the box of the one in United livery. Birdwatchers seek to capture the 'jizz' of a bird, the indefinable character which belongs to a particular species and aids its identification. If a bus has a 'jizz' than EFE has captured it perfectly in the REELL model. True you can nitpick on details; perhaps rather a lot of details are painted on rather than moulded, but economics obviously dictate this. EFE models are not unreasonably priced, but they're not exactly cheap either, and with every little detail moulded into the casting — especially those which change from batch to batch — would send the price through the roof. But the reversing window on some REs, painted on in silver, is not convincing. It appears on the Badgerline bus which was sold as a special for Showbus, though not on the superb United one which really is the business. EFE has a winner on its hands.

STEPHEN MORRIS



CORGİ ORIGINAL OMNIBUS Q1-CLASS TROLLEYBUS

It's always a pleasure to review a new casting, especially when it's a good one and the Q-class trolleybus is sure to catch your eye, with its appealing twin rear wheels, which always seems to add a touch of *'je ne sais quoi'* to any vehicle, especially in miniature.

This lovely new casting first appears as the preserved London Transport 1768 (HYM 768) and it looks quite superb in its display case, with beautiful little 'Trolleybus' decal on the front panel and period advertisements on front and sides. Indicators are in correct font for service 667 (Fulwell Depot being carried on front and rear). Headlamp centres feature a slightly gold-coloured effect, making them look more realistic too, whilst the foglamp is very neatly edged in black, well representing the real thing.

Livery application is excellent, with no untidy edging. Neat black lining is applied all round, a tidily-edged brown roof setting off the effect, as do the silver centres to the wheels, although the wheels should have a silver hubs and wheelnut rings rather than silvered centre area.

Roof detailing is good, with accurately detailed posable plastic booms and other roof-mounted equipment housings. Glazing is conventional, with proper metal pillars; half-drop window ventilators are neatly represented by ridges in the glazing material itself, as is the driver's opening windscreens.

From the side, the wheelarch mouldings are delightful, a nice touch being the addition of a separate moulding on the waist rail for the garage/running number holders. The London Transport fleetnames are a little less than perfect, being plain gold, not edged in black and very slightly too small, but this attention to detail really comes about because so much of the casting is so good!

Some weakness is evident from the rear aspect however; as with the pleasant Weymann trolleybus that preceded it, both the rear lower saloon and upper saloon windows are just too narrow, with overly wide metal areas to either side of them. Also, the rear registration plate decal is slightly misplaced (too far to the nearside and too high), the rear lamps being casually added on as red blobs in such a way that a rear advertisement would need to be too shallow to avoid these. However, it is praiseworthy that whilst the interior is largely dark green, the platform area has been correctly picked out in matt brown, to good effect.

All in all, this is a lovely new casting that will no doubt irresistibly appeal, especially to those susceptible to the magic of the traditional British double-decker trolleybus!

The second livery for this new casting is perhaps a little cheeky, but is entirely forgivable as City of Belfast BUT 203 (GZ 8567). The reason it is a little cheeky is that this was a 68-seater with body by Harkness, which has six lower saloon windows on each side, for example (whereas the Q1 has five), being similarly one window short of a side on the top deck too. However, it must be said that we certainly wouldn't get a commercially produced model of a Harkness-bodied BUT, so grateful we should be for this — and it doesn't look bad at all. In fact, Corgi has given us some minutely accurate details here, which are a delight. Livery is well captured, with rich red and off-white set off by black lining and a brown rear to the roof. Wheels are correctly all-silver and a decal has been added to the lower front paneling to represent the grille these vehicles had. Even a little white dot between the 'GZ' and '8567' of the registration plate has been reproduced — this is attention to detail for which Corgi should be proud.

Pleasant decals add to this model, with delightful coats of arms on front and sides, period advertisements for the *Belfast Telegraph* and Ulster Wine Company, as well as the rear detail already mentioned.

As with the London version, this is a model that deserves to succeed and looks very well indeed.

JOHN G. LIDSTONE



PICTURE

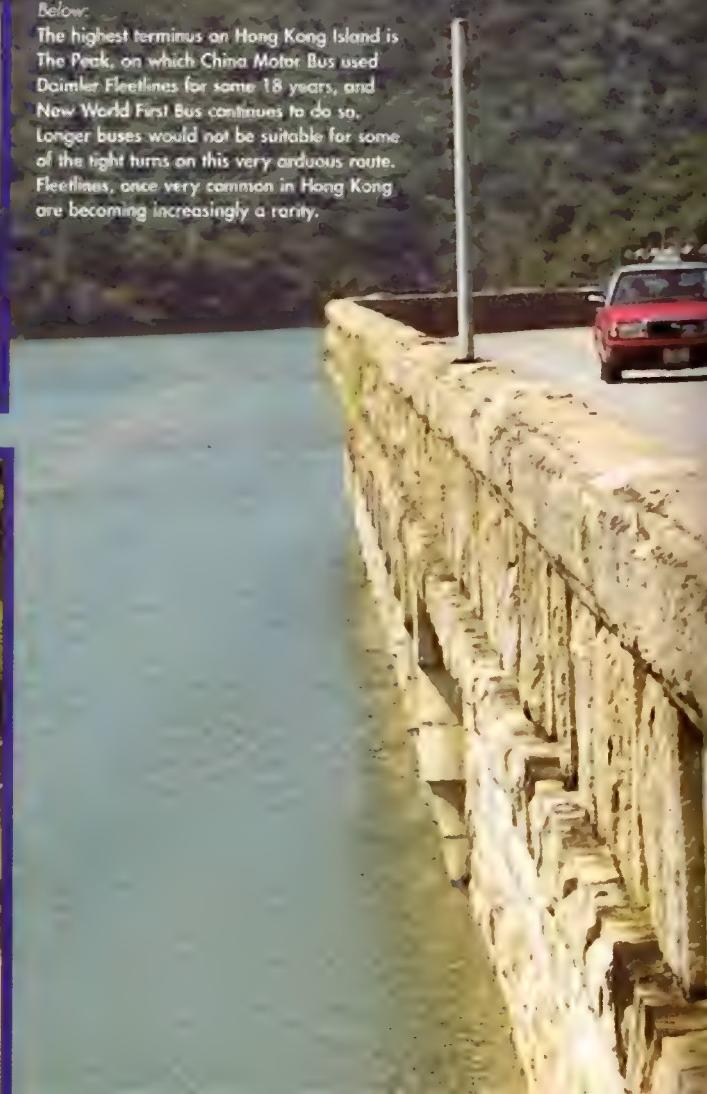


Of the 243 new Dennis entering service with New World First Bus, 201 are Alexander ALX500-bodied Dennis Tridents. No1001 (HU 8370) is seen on route 8 to Siu Sai Wan at Causeway Bay, Hong Kong Island.



The remaining 42 are Plaxton Pointer 2-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs. All 243 buses are air-conditioned.

Below:
The highest terminus on Hong Kong Island is The Peak, on which China Motor Bus used Daimler Fleetlines for some 18 years, and New World First Bus continues to do so. Longer buses would not be suitable for some of the tight turns on this very arduous route. Fleetlines, once very common in Hong Kong, are becoming increasingly a rarity.



REVIEW

New World in Hong Kong

New World First Bus, the joint venture between FirstGroup and Hong Kong's New World Development Company, took over the operation of China Motor Bus's services in Hong Kong on 1 September. It runs 710 buses on 88 routes, and FirstGroup has a 26% stake. While 245 air-conditioned, low-floor Dennises are currently being delivered, New World First has inherited an ageing fleet of China Motor Bus vehicles. Pictures by DONALD MacRAE

Main picture:

New World First Bus has inherited a sizeable quantity of front-engined Leyland Victories and Dennis Jubilants. Leyland Victory LV126 crosses the wall of the Tai Tam Dam on one of the most spectacular routes in the Territory, between Sai Wan Ho and Stanley on Hong Kong Island.



Preservation

Today MCW Metrobuses still whine their way around the Outer Circle, a long-established bus route with origins in the years following World War 1, a time of expansion when much of Birmingham's outer suburban fringe was established. Existing tram links radiated from the centre, so a circular service linking the outer suburbs was a natural choice to add to the burgeoning motorbus network, as it required a comparatively minimal investment in infrastructure.

Traffic on the route, numbered 11, grew and grew, even becoming at one time a favourite Sunday pastime with the locals.

A trip around the outer circle was a relatively cheap excursion!

Each year for the last 21 years, the enduring Outer Circle has been celebrated by the Aston Manor Museum of Road Transport with a rally at Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, incorporating a road run around approximately half of the route. All sorts of vehicles, not just buses and coaches take part, and this year was no exception.

Vehicles with local connections predominate on the run, there being examples of the Birmingham 'Standards', their successors the Daimler/Leyland Fleetlines, a heritage-liveried MCW Metrobus and representatives of Travel West Midlands' growing fleet of low-floor single-deckers, namely a Wright-bodied Volvo B6LE, a Wright-bodied Volvo B10L and a Mercedes O.405N, not to mention the company's single low-floor double-decker, Optare Spectra no1. Midland Red was not forgotten, with BMMO types D9, S15, S17

and S23 in evidence, as well as an NBC-era Marshall-bodied Leyland Leopard. Other former local municipalities were represented by an ex-West Bromwich former London Transport GS, and, from the Wythall collection, a dual-entrance Daimler Fleetline, built to Walsall's unique and somewhat eccentric specification.

Due to lack of space, it is impossible to list the many other buses and coaches attended, but special mention should be made of one or two of the more unusual vehicles present. Making its rally debut under new ownership was GOU 932, the well-known former Altonian Scottish Aviation-bodied Tilling Stevens K6LA7, whilst other visitors of note included ex-Alexander (Northern) ND20 (BMS 415) a 1948 Burlingham-bodied Daimler CVD6SD, now preserved locally, and ex-Bristol Tramways & Carriage all-Bristol K5G, C3336 (GHT 154), from the Bristol Industrial Museum.



Contrasts in eras are demonstrated in this view of the run approaching the former Selly Oak garage. Both these buses are owned by Travel West Midlands. Ahead of Optare Spectra no1 (R1 NEG), is ex-Birmingham 3225 (MOF 225), a Crossley-bodied Daimler CVG6.
PHILIP LAMB

BIRMINGHAM OUT



HAM'S EX-ER CIRCLE

This year's Outer Circle rally took place on 20 September. PHILIP LAMB reports on the day's events.



Opposite:
Passing the Selly Park Tavern at the close of the rally is BMMO S15-type 5056 (5056 HA) in dual-purpose livery.
PHILIP LAMB

Left:
Whilst the number of later model Bristol VRTs in preservation grows, the mark 1 remains comparatively rare. Preserved at Wythall is ex-Midland General 322, which was taken into the Trent fleet in 1972, as a result of Midland General being absorbed by its NBC relative and neighbour, becoming its no 761.
PHILIP LAMB



Ex-BMMO vehicles posed together in Cannon Hill Park are from left to right:
D9 5415 (EHA 415D), S15 5056 (5056 HA), S17 5479 (6479 HA) and S22
5901 (MHA 901F).

STEVE RICHARDS



Making its debut as a preserved vehicle is 'last' Travel West Midlands Leyland Fleetline 7000 (WDA 700T). It is a resident at Aston Manor Museum of Road Transport.
PHILIP LAMB

Rides on thirty Bristols

1998 sees the 90th anniversary of the Bristol marque and the organisers of the Warminster & West Wilts Vintage Bus Running Day on Sunday 13 September succeeded in providing a veritable feast of them for visiting enthusiasts to enjoy.

JAMES FREEMAN reports,
with pictures by
NIGEL APPLEFORD.

**With correct destination,
ex-Western National 353
(FTT 704), a 1945
Lowbridge Bristol K6A of
the Bristol Vintage Bus
Group waits time at
Warminster railway station.**



Double-decker vintage bus number 202, operating along the Hampshire Bus route. Tel: 01256 733215. E-mail: hampshirebus@btconnect.com

Since it started in 1994 with two vehicles, the Warminster event has rapidly gained a reputation for taking maximum advantage of the lovely countryside in the area to provide a range of picturesque journeys through West Wiltshire and East Somerset.

Warminster's heritage

Thinking back to the 1960s we are reminded that most buses in the southwest were operated by state-owned Transport Holding Company (THC) fleets, namely — green-liveried Southern/Western National, Bristol Omnibus (with its Bath subsidiaries) and Hants & Dorset, and Wilts & Dorset, which was red. These fleets had standardised for more than 20 years on Bristols with ECW bodies, so most rides in the Warminster area would have been provided by this type of vehicle.

This year's Warminster event succeeded in evoking memories of those already distant times, with 35 or so vehicles providing rides — an incredible number in itself! Of these some 30 were Bristols, the majority from the local area — Warminster was a border town in THC terms, served by Western National, Wilts & Dorset and Bath Tramways. Royal Blue coaches passed through as well.

Variety of vehicles, range of routes

Bob Eade and his organising committee have built a strong enthusiast following for the day, not just because of the variety of vehicles, but also as a result of the ever more ambitious timetable that is provided. Indeed, such is the range and choice of routes laid on that it is only possible to sample a small proportion of them during the day.

Main routes radiate from Warminster railway station (where the nearby Baden-Powell Hall provides a sale of books and models as well as much appreciated refreshments). The backbone of the operation is the 241 which was originally a joint service between Western National and Wilts & Dorset (which quaintly called it the 24 to fit in with its own series of route numbers) and operated from Trowbridge via Westbury and Warminster to Salisbury. For the event, the route was operated in two sections from Warminster to Westbury or Trowbridge in one direction, and to Codford in the other — with extensions to Steeple Langford in the afternoon and links through to Salisbury at the start and finish of the day.

Also regular were the 253 to Frome, with connections by service 235 thence to Trowbridge (meeting the 241 there), the 256 to Frome via Chapmanslade, the 257 connecting Frome and Westbury (where it, too, met the 241) and a range of services via different routes between Warminster and Mere via, variously, Kingston Deverill, November 1998



Crockerton, Horningsham and Maiden Bradley (routes 21/22/69/248). A selection of other routes ran less frequently.

New for this year was the Associated Motorways Coach Service from Warminster to Gillingham — worked by Royal Blue coaches.

The Longbridge Link

In Warminster, town service 'A' ran every hour, whilst the most intensive service of them all was the 'Longbridge Link' running every 15 minutes and connecting the main site at Warminster with two other points of interest. Because the ground was too wet at the George in Longbridge Deverill, where the trade stalls were doing a respectable trade, visiting buses were displayed at a hastily arranged bus park at Crockerton shopping village. The 'Longbridge Link' provided work for buses which were perhaps a little less authentic to the area or the era, but the key attraction of this event is the chance to see so many Bristols from the 1950s and 1960s at work in typical surroundings.

Favourites for me were the three Western National double-deckers — 1945 K6A, FTT 704, 1950 KS5G, LTA 813, and 1960 FLF6G, 468 FTT. Other Bristols attending included an L6B, two L5Gs, an LL6B, an LS6G, an SUL4A, an MW5G, an RESL6G, three RELL6Ls, three RELL6Gs, an RELH6L, a RELH6G, a VRT series 2, two VRT series 3s and an LH6L. Also present were Leathers' famous Bedford OB, an RT, two RFs, a magnificent Devon General AEC Regent III, a splendid AEC Reliance of Safeway, South Petherton and a Plaxton-bodied Leyland Panther from the King Alfred collection.

What makes a successful running day?

Elements of a successful running day must surely be a good location, an appropriate hinterland in which to plan routes, an interesting network with plenty of scope for connections, a wide variety of vehicles, a good, clear timetable, published well in



advance, good weather (luck plays a part here!), close supervision to ensure any snags get ironed out easily and lots of careful preparation and hard work by the organisers.

Warminster had all of these in profusion. Congratulations are due to the many people whose efforts coincided to bring the Warminster & West Wilts Vintage Bus Running Day to fruition. The weather (which threatened all sorts) was, in the event, kind and the buses proved, in the main, mechanically reliable. The arrangements at Warminster had been reworked this year by using the former coach station as an arrivals and parking area, so congestion was much less of a problem than previously.

And if all this appeals to you, make a note of New Year's Day — Friday 1 January 1999, the date of the Winchester & West Hants Running Day organised by the Friends of King Alfred Buses!

Top:
Flat screen ex-Bristol Omnibus Bristol RELL6L 1071 (OHU 770F), a relative newcomer to the preservation scene is seen near Warminster on a 318 working to Chipping Sodbury.

Above:
Ex-Southern National (Royal Blue) 1297, a 1953 Bristol LS6G (OTT 96) is seen on the Associated Motorways service to Gillingham.

TRANSPERIENCE ASSETS SOLD

The assets of the ill-fated West Yorkshire Transport Museum (Transperience) were sold by auction on 24 September. Transperience is in administrative receivership and the assets have been sold on the instructions of the administrator.

However most of the vehicles were sold before the sale to the Keighley Bus Museum, which has been running a campaign for some 12 months to acquire the vehicles. There is a certain appropriateness in this, in that many of the vehicles housed in the previous West Yorkshire Transport Museum at Ludlam Street, Bradford, formed the nucleus of the Keighley Museum when they were deemed surplus to the requirements of the grand new museum at Low Moor.

Keighley Bus Museum enlisted considerable local support, including Keighley MP Ann Cryer and junior minister Mark Foster, as well as local councillors etc. Funds were made available from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Science Museum and Bradford Council.

All but two of the buses at Transperience have gone to Keighley; they are Bradford Leyland Lion 325 (KW 2260), AEC Regent V 220 (6220 KW) and Leyland PD3 309 (LAK 309G); West Yorkshire Bristol LL5G SGL16 (JWU 886); Halifax Daimler CVG6 119 (GJX 331) and Leyland Leopard 232 (PJX 232); Huddersfield Daimler Fleetline 473 (KVN 473E) and AEC Mandator tower wagon MVH 388; and Leeds Daimler Fleetline 131 (HNW 131D). Many of these are in exceptionally good condition.

The Museum has also acquired on loan Bradford's last trolleybus 844 (FWX 914), which is owned by West Yorkshire PTE and was exhibited at Transperience, and three Leeds vehicles belonging to private owners have also moved to Keighley from Transperience. They are AEC Regent 139 (ANW 682), Leyland Tiger PS1 28 (MNW 86) and AEC Matador MUB 647.

The collection was moved immediately, only two hours after the completion of the deal, in an operation which took 12 hours. Eight of the vehicles were able to attend the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's 30th anniversary celebrations in September.

THE DEPOT

Work has now been completed on the structure of the building adjacent to the Underground at Acton Town, destined to house London Transport's reserve collection containing some 360,000 artefacts ranging from uniform buttons to tube trains. The project has been made possible due to a grant from the Lottery Heritage Fund, the building being officially opened by Denis Tunnicliffe, Chief Executive of London Transport in a short ceremony on 25 September.

The site, to be known as the Depot, was once the London Transport Underground crash repair workshop, and has been extended and remodelled in order to fulfil its new role. The Depot will hold public open days six times a year, with an expected attendance of around 2,000-3,000 on each occasion. At other times, it will be open for bona fide research by arrangement.

Work now continues on fitting out the building for its new role, with the road transport exhibits scheduled to arrive on 5 December, when a road run through central London, via Covent Garden Piazza, home of the London Transport Museum itself, will take place. Further details may be obtained from the London Transport Museum on 0171 379 6344.

A detailed account of the plans for the Depot will appear in *Preserved Bus* no 5, on sale 17 December.

Denis Tunnicliffe tightens a fishplate bolt to commemorate the opening of the Depot.
PHILIP LAMB



LOLINE DEBUT

A Middlesbrough Corporation Northern Counties-bodied Dennis Loline I made its debut at Showbus, Duxford, on 27 September. The bus has been in preservation for in excess of 20 years, but more serious work on restoring it began more recently. The Loline, No99 (JDC 599), was exhibited at the Commercial Motor Show in 1958, and restoration was finished just in time for it to make the lengthy journey from its home in Stockton-on-Tees. It passed its MoT just three days before the event and had an uneventful journey to Cambridgeshire despite more than two decades' inactivity.

Understandably the vehicle attracted a great deal of attention at Showbus; normally being so late in the season it is unusual for vehicles to make their debut there.

The Middlesbrough Dennis Loline attracted much attention at Showbus.
STEPHEN MORRIS



OXFORD BUS MUSEUM NEWS

The number of vehicles in residence at the Oxford Bus Museum continues to grow. No less than four Leyland Leopards have recently arrived. Three, all of local origin, were found in Scotland — ex-Oxford Citylink ECW-bodied PSU3G/4R 30 (VUD 30X) is to be restored to the Citylink 190 livery once carried, whilst Plaxton Panorama Elite-bodied PSU3B/4R variants — AUD 310J and YWL 134K will be returned to the liveries of their original operators — Slatters of Long Hanborough (the village where the museum is located), and Jarvis of Middle Barton respectively. The fourth ECW ECW-bodied Leopard PSU3G/4R, UKE 830X, intended to be used for spares, has come from Motts of Aylesbury.

Also acquired, directly from the Oxford Bus Company is former London Buses T869 (A869 SUL), this Leyland Titan passed to the Oxford Bus Company in 1993 as its 975, having been the victim of a deroofing incident at New Cross station. It had been offered for spares, but upon acquisition, Oxford Bus Company dispatched it to Merseybus, where it was fitted with the roof from T142.



Leyland Leopard/ Plaxton, YWL 134K seen here in Heyfordian livery, but carrying the fleetname of its last operator, Pegasus of Perth, has reverted to its original registration, having been FIL 3005.
PHILIP LAMB

DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S DIARY (TO BE CONFIRMED) ARE:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 21 March | Bristol VR day |
| 15-16 May | Open Weekend |
| 4 July | Morris-Commercial Gathering |
| 17-19 September | Beer Festival |

PRESERVED BUS ON SALE

Preserved Bus 4 is now on sale price £2.50. The 56pp magazine includes features on the vehicles saved by the late Fred Mulley, Morris Commercial's psvs, including a profile of a unique little coach converted from an ice cream van, open-top operation in Bournemouth today and a re-creation of an Oxfordshire scene on COMS route 75. We continue the story of RT1's on-going restoration and there is the usual colourful coverage of recent rallies. There is also a free print of a period scene in south London. *Preserved Bus* is available from good newsagents, including most branches of W. H. Smiths and specialist outlets, or direct from Ian Allan Publishing at Hersham.

NO CONNECTION ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT

The Traditional Motor Bus Company wishes us to point out that it is not connected with the Isle of Wight Bus Museum as suggested in 'Preservation Update' last month.



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All aboard for a cracker of a day out at our Pre-Christmas festival. Get transport-type presents, take a ride on a vintage bus and have a look at the entertainment laid on. The free vintage bus service provides a link to The Manchester Model railway exhibition. A perfect way to round off the season.

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Postal Sales or Membership Secretary (as applicable),
London Omnibus Traction Society,
Unit 8, Battersea Business Centre,
103-109 Lavender Hill, London, SW11 5QF.

A1A Travel, Birkenhead

A new delivery is Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B39F 53 (R970 MGB). Optare Excels R845/6 FWW are now numbered 45, 46. Acquisitions are Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer B39F 54 (J954 RYS) and Mercedes-Benz L608D D892 NDS ex-Dickson of Erskine. Mercedes-Benz 609Ds 2 and 9 (L2 BUS, L899 LFS) have been withdrawn and sold to Blytheswood, Glasgow (dealer), while Dennis Dart 52 (R526 YRP) has returned to Dawson Rentals (dealer). Mercedes-Benz L207D 5 (SXI 9035) and Freight Rover Sherpa 10 (AIA 5505) have been sold for scrap.

ABC Travel, Formby

Understood to be the first Optare Solo delivered to an operator other than Wilts & Dorset is S22 ABC, which is B25F. It is to be followed by S33 ABC.

Abus, Bristol

Bristol REEL6L 1307 (HHW 920L) is now in use on Sundays/Bank Holidays service 778 (Bristol-Keynsham-Midsomer Norton-Writhlington), back in passenger use again ex-preservation. A later REEL, 1332 (OAE 954M), is also in stock, but is not a regular performer.

Aintree Coachline, Bootle

Leyland Leopard UDW 640W (AAX 528A, PKG 104Y) has come from AC Travel of Northfleet. Volvo B10M/Plaxton Expressliner C46Ft K18 AMB from Express Travel of Speke. An interesting arrival is Bristol RE BFM 293L from Merseypride, Garston, but for spares only apparently.

Volvo Citybus F254 OFP has been withdrawn and sold to Supreme, Hadleigh, Essex. Leyland Titan CUL 72V has been withdrawn and is under cannibalisation. Leyland Tiger C67 GTU has gone to Merseypride.

Alexcars, Glos

Former Cambus VW LT55 Optare CityPacers E901/2 LVE are re-registered ACH 80, 85A respectively.

Arriva Colchester AA

This fleet is now controlled from Arriva The Shires from Luton.

Geoff Mills notes that only four MCW Metrobuses are in service thus far, as 220/99, 301/36 (BYX 220/99, 301V, EYE 336V) — but it is understood more will follow. Three more Dennis Dart SLFs displaced from Arriva East Herts & Essex are in stock in the shape of Plaxton Pointer B42F-bodied 419/20/2 (P419 HVX etc).

Three further Leyland Atlanteans withdrawn are 68, 71 and 75 (TPU 68R etc), leaving 77 (YNO 77S) as the oldest in stock, one of 13 remaining.

Arriva Cymru AA

It's welcome home again to Leyland Olympian ONLBX 1/R/ECW H45/32F DOG186 (B186 BLG), re-acquired from Arriva Fox County, although it was in use previously most recently on loan to Arriva Yorkshire. It is at work at Caergo.

Further Optare MetroRiders taken into stock from Arriva Yorkshire are MR05/B31F MMC919/21 (J719/21 CUM). Previously acquired J715/8/22 CUM and K723/4/6-9 HUG are numbered MMC915/8/22/4-6/9 respectively. MMC922/3, now at Aberystwyth, are in turquoise with Park & Ride lettering. Former Devaway Leyland National 2s SNL132 and SNL49 (B132 SED, C49 OCM) are early repainted into Arriva livery: they retain Leyland engines.

All open-toppers apart from Bristol VRT DVG528 (DCA 528X) were outshopped during the season with advertising for Rhyl Sun Centre on their nearsides — the first time advertising has been carried since Lodekkas back in 1975.

Another Bristol VRT/SL3 withdrawn is DVG529 (DCA 529X), along with Mercedes-Benz L608D MMM43 (D443 UHC). Mercedes L608Ds have been accumulating with Arriva Scotland, which has MMM37 9, 414, (D437 UHC etc), MMM59, 65 6, 80 5, 94 (D959 65 6 UDY, D80 5, 98 VCC) and MMM167 71 4 88 9 (D167 VRP etc). Arriva North West has Leyland National SNL648 (GMB 648T).

Sold for scrap are VR DVG476 (WTU 476W) to PVS, Barnsley (dealer); Leyland National 2 SNL19 (DMS 19V) and VRs DVG505 13/4 (YMB 505W etc) to Whiting, Pontefract (dealer); VR DP EVG50 (PFA 50W) and bus DVG449 54 6/61, 529 (UDM 449V, RUA 454 56 61W, DCA 529X) to Lister, Bolton (dealer).

Arriva East Herts & Essex AA**(County Bus)**

Like Colchester, this company is now controlled by Arriva The Shires.

Arriva London North AA**(Leaside Buses)**

The only four Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Darts in this fleet, DRL49-52 (K549-52 ORH), have been transferred to Arriva London South. Red advert MCW Metrobus M353 (GYE 353W) has been under open-top conversion recently, whilst M233 (BYX 233V) is to be the first single-door refurbishment for Arriva East Herts & Essex. M310, 689, 707/48 (BYX 310V, KYV 689, 707 48X) are converted to open-top by Chassis Developments of Leighton Buzzard for Arriva London Coaches, while M509/33 and 754 (GYE 509/33W, KYV 754X) have also gone there, without being converted.

Arriva London South AA**(South London)**

The new dual-door Plaxton Pointer B26D-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs for service 319 are DDL1-18 (S301-18 JUA). They entered service on 27 August.

Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Darts DRL49-52 (K549-52 ORH) have been transferred from Arriva London North. Red advert framing has been fitted to all former Kentish Bus L-class Leyland Olympians — looking less attractive on the remaining dowdy cream/maroon-liveried examples.

MCW Metrobuses M251, 314/88, 410/64, 552 and 672 (BYX 251, 314V, GYE 388, 410/64, 552W, KYV 672X) are delicensed, earmarked for transfer to provincial Arriva subsidiaries such as Colchester and East Herts & Essex.

Former Londonlinks Volvo Citybuses have been noted, many parked up, at Arriva various locations. VE650/2-4/9/63/4/72/80/4 (H650 GPF etc) have been noted at Arriva Derby and VE682 (H682 HPF) at Arriva Fox County at Thurnastion. VE648/9/51/6-8 (H648 GPF etc) are also expected with Arriva Midlands North and are understood to be parked up at Lichfield, with VE660-2/5/7/8/70/3/8/9/83 (H660 GPF etc) also inactive with Arriva The Shires. However, VE673/8/83 (H673 GPF etc) have since passed to Tillingbourne, Cranleigh.

Arriva Manchester AA**(Beeline)**

Inter-company transfers see the arrival of Mercedes 811D 88 (G118 TND), Leyland National 2s 280/4, (FCA 10X, NTU 15Y) and Leyland Olympians 601/2 (DBV 135/6Y) from Arriva North West, Mercedes 811D 170 (J10 SLT) moving the opposite way.

Dennis Lance Northern Counties B49F demonstrator P542 BPH has been on loan, temporarily numbered 1200.

Leyland National 2s LRB 203W, VBG 88V are numbered 265/76 and Leyland National YPL 386T is 316. Dennis Dart 1283 (P3 SLT) is renumbered 1300.

Arriva North East AA

Readers have requested news for The Eden, Tees, Teesside and United under this one heading, so in response, I am pleased to try this again from this month.

Consequently, it may be useful to give here the combined opening fleet for Arriva North East, comprising:

70 Leyland Olympian (202-4/6-10/4-8/23/5-8/33-47/50-3/5/6 8/63/5-8/71-95); nine Bristol VRTs (756/86, 808/22-4/31/64/92); 61 Leyland Tiger DPs (1229 32/4/5, 1301-3/5-15/24/5/7-36/8/40/2-6, 1401-6/10-2/5-20/3/5/6/31-4); 51 Optare Vectas (1501-51); nine Dennis Dart SLFs (1601-9); 25 Mercedes-Benz/Optare Prismas (3001-25); nine Volvo/DAF-engined Leyland Nationals (3100, 3601-3/5-7/62/8); 20 Leyland 0680/DAF-engined Leyland National 2s (3111/4/9/22/3/6, 3730-2/4/7/9-41/3/50-4); 34 Gardner-engined Leyland National 2s (3130/1/4-8/40/2/3/7-50/2/3, 3744/5/7-9/58-70; 18 National Greenways (3505-22); 22 DAF SB220/Optare Deltas (4001-22); five Leyland Lynxes (5001-5); 13 Lynx 2s (5006-18); 16 Mercedes-Benz minis (2443 6/8/51/3/6/9/60/6/71-5/8/9); 60 Optare MetroRiders (2601-45, 2701-25). The driver training school also had Bristol LHS 92, 93, 1714 (WAE 192T, LPT 703T, AFB 589V) and Bristol VRT 95 (UGR 698R).

**Body type**

- A** Articulated
- B** Single-deck bus
- C** Coach
- D** Dual purpose, usually coach seats/bus shell
- H** Double-decker
- L** Lowbridge double-decker (ie with side sunken gangway upstairs. All other types, with conventional gangways are H [Highbridge] regardless of overall height)
- O** Open-top
- OO** Convertible open-top

Seating capacity

(For double-deckers this is shown with the upper-deck capacity first, eg 43/30, indicating 43 'over' 30. Where these are not known a total figure is given).

Door position

- F** Front
- R** Rear
- C** Centre
- D** Dual doors

When platform doors are fitted where these would not normally figure, usually on rear entrance buses, this is indicated by D after the door position. The letter 't' after the door indicates the provision of a toilet whilst L after the door position shows that a wheelchair lift is fitted.

Re-registrations

Where a vehicle is re-registered its previous registration numbers follow in italic type, with the most recent given first where it has been registered more than once.

Vehicle reports should be sent to

J. G. Lidstone, 76 Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2XD.

Please mark your envelope 'Fleet News'.

Deliveries comprise new DAF SB220GS-Plaxton Prestige B45F 4023-43 (R423-41 RPY, S341-3 KHN), primarily allocated to inter-worked services 17, 18 and 27 (Stockton/Middlesbrough/Yarm). The complete batch is due to replace the last Mk1 Leyland Nationals and allow the cascade of National Greenways elsewhere. Further B41F National Greenways, 3523/4 (SIB 6710/2), are in stock from Arriva Kent & Sussex. Mercedes-Benz L608D 2459 (D659 CVN) is a surprise repaint into Arriva livery, given the rapid demise of the type of late. Approximately a quarter of the fleet (102) was in turquoise by the early autumn.

Bristol VRT/SL3 808/24 (APT 808W, MEF 824W) have been placed into Reserve stock, 808 on loan to the driving school; Leyland Tiger 1303 is in use at Stockton, ex-Reserve. L608D 2472 (D472 EAJ) is delicensed for disposal and 2479 (D479 EAJ) is with The Eden, ex-Reserve. Leyland National 2 3111 (UBR 111V) being set aside for disposal from Reserve.

Thanks go to the United Enthusiasts Club for its welcome support for 'Fleet News'. For details, please send an SAE to: M. McCoy, United Enthusiasts Club, 2 Oakdene Close, Normanby, TS6 0HB. Thanks also to K. Kee, Quality Manager for Arriva North East.

Arriva Northumbria

The first double-decker to lose Northumbria livery in favour of Arriva turquoise was Leyland Olympian 408 (C261 UAJ).

The driver training fleet comprises rebuilt Leyland National 90 (GSU 347, GOL 399M) and Leyland National 2s 91 (WSV 569, recently re-registered from RDC 736X) and 92 (UBR 110V). These are the last of the 94 Leyland Nationals once owned that are still in operational use here. Leyland National 2 734 (RDC 735X) is with March of Cheltenham, 777 (APT 120W) passing to The Shires for spares.

Arriva North West

(North Western)

Dennis Lance 11SDA3113/Northern Counties B49F demonstrator P452 BPH has been on loan from Plaxton and numbered 1200 temporarily.

Volvo Citybuses 650-2 (G650-2 EKA) are in Arriva livery and route-branded for service 385 (Wigan-Southport). Leyland National 437 (XYS 596S) has escaped withdrawal as first expected and is in service in Liverpool. Iveco 59.10s 189/90 (M239-40 XLV) have been withdrawn and sold.

Arriva Southend

Having fallen initially under London & Country control with British Bus, prompting the introduction of fleetnumber prefix codes, then falling under Leaside control (enabling the loan of Routemaster RMC1453), latterly under Cowie and Arriva, now this fleet falls under Arriva The Shires control.

Further acquisitions from Arriva East Herts & Essex are manual gearbox Iveco 59.12 Marshall C31 B25F 439/40 (N739-40 AWV), these being the first manual minibuses for passenger service. 439 was quickly outshopped in turquoise, 440 being used as a shuttle in cream/dark green County Bus colours initially. 440 is to replace the last Leyland National. DAF-engined 745 (PJI 3745). The pair of Leyland National 2s, 12 and 25 (BVP 812V, EON 825V) quickly passed to Supreme Coach & Travel, Hadleigh for use on schools contracts. Mercedes-Benz 711D MM478 (P478 DPE) is another to lose its 'MM' prefix, on repaint out of Southend livery. MM481 (P481 DPE) is already the last minibus left in Southend livery.

Arriva The Shires

New are Volvo Olympian Northern Counties Palatine II DPH39 29F 5146-54 6-61 (S146-54-6-61 KNK).

Arriva Yorkshire

(West Riding)

New are further DAF DE02GSSB220 Alexander ALX300 B42F 462-71 (S462-71 GUB) originally intended as R464-71 KWT.

Averon, Mellings

Withdrawn are AEC Routemaster YVS 292 (LDS 354A, 32 CLT) and Leyland Leopards TIB 9287 (PCW 678P, XWV 186S and OUF 65W).

Avon, Moreton

A further pair of Leyland Titans in stock is T41, T62 (A941/62 SYE) from London Central and converted to single-door, H44/32F ex-H44/26D. Blackpool Leyland Atlantean/Northern Counties Paladin saloon rebody TKU 466K was on loan earlier this year for evaluation. Withdrawn are Leyland Atlantean A47 (SDC 146H) and MCW Metrorider M139 (E139 RNY), both passed to Merseypride. Volvo Ailsa ANC 578A (JOV 760P) has also been withdrawn.

Bevan, Glos

A new arrival is Volvo Plaxton Prima C53F R170 SUT.

The Big Bus Company, London SW17

Leyland Titans are flooding into stock here, latest acquired being OHV 712/20/2/3/5/42 63/76/81 6/8/90/2, 808/11Y, many via Ensign, Rainham (dealer). The latest reported in service is OHV 790Y.

CUL 164V is converted to open-top after initial use in closed-top form.

Blackpool Transport

New is Dennis Javelin 12SDA MarcoPolo C53F 27 (R927 TFR).

Optare Excel demonstrator N330 EUG has been on extended loan based at Squires Gate; sister Excel demonstrator P447 SWX has been on loan and used on service 44A (Marion & Cleveleys).

Partial open-top Leyland Atlantean 454 (ARH 307K) is now in full fleet colours and DAF SB220 Optare Deltas 122 30 (H122 CHG, K130 UVF) have had their livery modified to match all others, thus eliminating the original-style livery on these. The last Atlantean in older-style Blackpool livery was 338 (AHG 338V) and the last coach in older-style Seagull Coaches colours is Leyland Tiger 23 (F703 ENE), now delicensed. Former Fylde Northern Counties-bodied Atlantean 478 (HRN 98N) sports an East Lancs-style front dash after rebuilding.

Rebodied Leyland Atlantean-Northern Counties Paladin saloons 134-7 (TKU 462 5 6 9K) have been back in regular service this season on Promenade service 1 and Zoo service 21, 136 after its sojourn with Merseypride on services 6 12A.

Renault-Dodge S565 510/1/20 (E110/1 LCW, F120 UFR) have been sold to Chepstow Bus, Caerleon.

The Mercedes-Benz Vario depicted in HandyBus black/yellow in Buses September is operated by Phoenix Travel (see below) and not this operator.

Black Prince Buses, Morley

New are Mercedes-Benz O.405 Optare Prisma B49F 901 2 (S901 2 DUB), as usual painted in differing styles with 901 in predominantly red yellow, 902 predominantly maroon yellow. They are used mostly on new service 4A (Whinmoor-Leeds).

Optare MetroRiders 167, 269 (K167 FYG, N289 NWY) along with Scania saloon S113 (F113 DMJ) are freshly painted in red yellow, the latter renumbered 113 following the demise of V113.

Bluebird, Moston

New at work here are Dennis Dart SLF East Lancs Spryte S551 BNV. Twin R526 YRP is thought only on loan from Dawson Rentals (dealer). Both are all-over white, with Bluebird fleetnames on dash panels.

The recently-acquired ex-Stagecoach Manchester Leyland Atlanteans are numbered 24-29 (SND 468X, A745 NNA, A699 HNB, A730 LNC, A715/9 LNC).

Blue Bus, Horwich

Following the delivery of new coach-seated Volvo Olympian/East Lancs Pioneer DPH45/30F 44 (R44 BLU), a further pair has been delivered as bus-seated 43 and 45 (S43, 45 SNB).

Former Tees & District Leyland Tiger/Duple Dominant B55F 56, 57 (C76 UHN, B957 LHN) are in stock.

Leyland Tiger MNS 6Y is away at East Lancs for rebodying, with 65 (EWR 657Y) to follow upon its completion.

Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards 18-21/9 and 31/9 (ULS 318-29T, CSF 160W, WFS 141W, GMS 299S, TSJ 61S, YCS 93T) are confirmed remaining in stock, 18 not being withdrawn after all. Additionally, a 'hire fleet' comprises red-liveried Leopards 24, 35/6 (ULS 334T, EGB 51, 60T). The remains of Leopard PHN 572R have been sold for scrap.

Volvo B10Ms HIL 7467 and MBZ 6454 have passed to Green Triangle.

Border Buses, Burnley

Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R Plaxton C51F 213 (A213 SAE) is an acquisition from Harrogate & District, twin 88 (AAX 488A) coming from Red & White.

Tiger 51 (GSU 551, A201 MFR) has passed to Shuttlebus, Kilwinning.

Brym Melyn, Llangollen

Bristol VRT/SL3s UDM 451V and GGM 110W, along with Dennis Dominator F201 OPD are employed on an increased frequency Llangollen-Wrexham service.

Bullock, Cheadle

Another new vehicle is Volvo B10M-62 Caetano Algarve C53F R293 CVM

A further MCW Metrobus to arrive from Mainline is A118 XWE. Alexander-bodied Scania BR1120Hs JIL 8211/2 have been re-registered RND 881/2X and sold to Black Prince Buses, Morley. Dennis Javelin M781 NBA has been sold McTaggart of Greenock. Volvo Olympian P486 HBA is first of its batch in dealer-stock white to receive livery.

Busco, Garston

Leyland Nationals UHG 721 37R are with Leyland of Fulwood. RSG 816V passing to Cygnet of Darton.

Bu-Val, Smithybridge

New deliveries are Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/ Plaxton Beaver 2 R813-6 WJA, initially at work in all-over white. Upon their arrival, borrowed Iveco M961 ENH and Mercedes-Benz N867 FPB and P521 UGA were returned.

Former Nip-on, St Helens Marshall Minibus B26F P689 90 NAV are youthful acquisitions here.

C&G, Chatteris

Former Ribble and Southend Bristol VRT SL3-501(6LXB) ECW H43/31F LHG 440T is acquired from Howard of Halstead.

Cambridge Coach Services

The new coach-seated Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine II DPH39 29F 91, 92 GTM have enabled the need for duplicates on service 74 to be avoided. Volvo B10Ms 321/4 (F421/4 DUG) have been withdrawn as a result.

Group codes

AA	Arriva Passenger Services
BL	Blazefield Holdings
EY	EYMS Group
FB	First Bus
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MT	MTL Holdings
NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction

Opposite:
ABC Travel, Formby, is the first operator other than Wilts & Dorset to receive an Optare Solo; S22 ABC was delivered in September.
R. L. WILSON

An impressive addition to the fleet of Abbott, Leeming, is this Scania K124IB with Irizar Century bodywork. It is the first three-axle Century to feature the new frontal styling.
TONY GREAVES



Cambridge Pullman

Two ex-Oxford Bus Company Dennis Javelins are in stock, replacing the MCW Metroliner and are K750/2 UJO.

Bristol RELH6G/ECW SFV 896G is back in service and has been used on schools contracts, still in traditional Eastern Counties cream and maroon livery. Former Great Yarmouth AEC Swift WEX 686M is also in store as a preservation project.

MCW Metroliner EGX 982 (B431 LRA, 889 DXV, B233 XEU) has been sold.

Cannon Travel, Speke

Former West Midlands Leyland Fleetline SDA 515S is in stock ex-Howe of Waddington.

Castle Buses, Speke

Leyland Fleetline SDA 778S is in stock ex-Merseyline of Garston, Leyland Atlantean XWG 639T from Drury, Emberton, Scania BR116 UCW 192X (DIL 4942, UBV 595X, KIW 2923, 1 JVK, DKW 526X) from McLaughlin, Penwortham, Leyland Leopard/Duple C53F VFV 7V from Ribble, Leyland Leopard/Duple C53F FWA 498W and Dodge D317 SDS and D681 SEM ex-Mainline. The Dodges quickly moved on to A1 Travel of Speke. Iveco 49.10 D860 FOT has gone to Cannon of Speke.

Cedric, Wivenhoe

A new arrival is Setra S250 C49F1 S7 CED

From Midland Fox come Leyland Olympian ONTL11/1R/ECW H46/31F 2, 4 (ACM 710/05X) whilst ECW-bodied Olympian coach 17 (B694 BPU) has been withdrawn and sold to Holeswood of Rufford where it joins similar A105 FPL ex-Oares of Holywell.

Chester City Transport

The recent acquisitions to upgrade the midibus fleet, Optare MetroRider MRO9/B25F are numbered 269-76 (G769-776 WFC) and will replace Dodge S56s 34-79-41 (E134-7 XCA, E39-41 YMB). Marshall minibuses 49 and 50 are renumbered 249/50 to fall in line in this number series.

The 1972 Daimler Fleetline CRG6LXB rebodied with a 1985 Northern Counties H43/29F body, 57 (OFM 957K) is converted to open-top — an interesting alteration for the oldest member of the normal fleet. Convertible open-top Leyland Fleetline 96 (SDM 96V) has been active with roof removed, but this year in Chester City Transport/Guide Friday livery, thought to replace open-topper 90 (KFM 90T), now with Bryn Melyn, Llangollen. Fleetline 80 (DWH 682W) has passed to PVS, Barnsley (dealer) for scrap and Dennis Dominator 121 (OCS 34X) is currently under cannibalisation.

The Leyland Lions acquired from Clydeside in 1994, 16-20 (E889, 925/41/38/5 CDS) are reported withdrawn and sold to the only other operator of the type in quantity, Nottingham City.

Citybus, Toxteth

Bristol VRT/SL2 GNJ 576N has been scrapped.

Classic, Annfield Plain

New Optare Excel/B39F S2, 3 CLC were promptly in service in early August, in use on service 729 (Stanley & Chester-le-Street).

In stock from MK Metro are Mercedes-Benz L608D/Robin Hood D119 VRP, 709D/Dormobile Routemaker B29F G93 ERP. Renault S56/Plaxton Beaver B28F J227/30 JJR and 709D/Plaxton Beaver B23F J988 TVU. Some were initially operated in standard livery, with Derwent Buses fleetnames, from Swalwell depot. This has since closed, all operations being transferred to the main Annfield Plain site.

Classic, High Wycombe

I have been asked to point out that former Colchester Bristol RELLs SWC 25K and OWC 723M are not joining this fleet.

CMT Buses, Aintree

Dennis Dart SPD/Plaxton Pointer demonstrator R739 TMO has been on loan. The last two dual-door Leyland Nationals at work are 1063/87 (WYJ 170S, AYR 303T).

Dennis's, Dukinfield

Mercedes-Benz 709Ds N257-9 DUR have been sold to Pete's Travel of West Bromwich.

Arriva Yorkshire has received its Alexander ALX300-bodied DAF SB220s; 441 (R441 KWT) is seen in Selby.
PAUL WIGAN



Border, Burnley, now has this former Timeline Alexander (Belfast) N-type-bodied Leyland Tiger, G61 RND.
PAUL WIGAN



Dial-a-bus, St Ives

The last two Optare CityPacers to be built, L611/2 WCC, are in stock and at work on Park & Ride work in St Ives, replacing less stylish Freight Rover Sherpas on this work.

Durbin FG

Bristol VRT/SL3s 5117 (RHT 511S), 5501 (LEU 262P) and highbridge 5503 (WKO 131S) are due to be withdrawn, with CityLine 5140 (AHU 517V) and Badgerline's 5531/60 (EWS 739W, STW 33W) replacing them. 5531 is of the uncommon VRT/SL3/680 type but lost its Leyland 0.680 engine only this June.

Dunn Line, Nottingham

New are five S-registered coaches, S595-9 KJF. They are Jonckheere Mistral C51Ft-bodied Volvo B10Ms.

East Yorkshire EY

DAF SB220/Plaxton Prestige LPG demonstrator P10 LPG has been on trial, noted on services 66 and 181 (Hull-Hessle) alongside Optare Excels.

National Greenways 255/6 (JIL 2155/6) are reallocated to main fleet stock from Scarborough & District, at Hornsea. Optare Prismas 282/3 (R282/3 EKH) now wear Stagecoach colours for use on service X62 (Hull-Leeds). Volvo B10Ms 215-8 (M415-8 RRN) are route-branded for service X46 (Hull-York).

Ebley, Glos

Former Bygone Tours/Brighton Leyland National 2 NL116HLBX/1R XFG 25, 30Y are in stock, 25 upseated to B52F with luggage rack replaced by seating, 30 remaining B47F.

EMS, Greasby

MCW Metroliner DR130/CH55/20Dt GIL 6239 is in stock ex-Avon of Prenton.

Ensignbus, Purfleet

Ensignbus has been reformed, with an opening fleet comprising MCW Metros 122 (KJW 322W) ex-West Midlands, 147/9 (B147/9 EDP) ex-Reading, 172 (GOG 272W) ex-West Midlands, 180 (ANA 180Y) ex-Stagecoach Manchester and 192 (F292 NHJ) ex-London Pride. Daimler Fleetline 333 (EGP 33J) comes from London Pride as do heritage AEC Regent III RT3232 (KYY 961) and open-top sister RT4169 (LYF 228). The DMS is in Seville, Spain, the RTs placed into store at Purfleet.

Coaching stock, all from Yeates Bus & Coach (dealer) comprises Volvo B10M/Plaxton Paramount III 244/50/2/6/81/4 (H544 DVM, H950/2, 256 DRJ, H281 NRF, H584 VVG), for a connecting service between Ashford International station and Calais via the Channel Tunnel, under contract to Connex South Central (and based at Ashford). Minibus stock comprises Ford Transits 830/47 (L830 MJN, E474 JYT) from Eastonways.

I am grateful to Peter Rigarsford of Ensignbus for kindly offering regular fleet updates to 'Fleet News'.

Finglands, Rusholme EY

New is Toyota Coaster/Caetano Optimo IV C21F 369 (S369 SND).

Confirmation of recent double-decker acquisitions show Leyland Atlantean AN68D/1R/Northern Counties H43/32F 1755/6 (ANA 639Y, A671 HNB), AN68A/2R/Alexander H49/37F 1757 (AVI 177V), Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1R/ECW H45/32F 1758 (JTY 404X), AN68B/1R/Roe H43/30F 1759/60 (KPJ 284/6W) and similar, but AN68A/1R 1761/2 (EPH 223/9V). Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premier 320 368 (P533 CLJ) is in stock also and wears new coach livery as does Mercedes-Benz O.303 360 (10 RU).

Campuslink-liveried vehicles have lost Campuslink fleetnames but retain their mainly-brown livery. Leyland Leopard 235 (SIB 6615) and Leyland Tiger 302 (F302 JNC) now carry gold Finglands fleetnames.

Atlantean 1752 (ANA 572Y) has been withdrawn after damage sustained back in May and has gone to PVS, Barnsley (dealer) for scrap. Atlanteans 903/39 (UNA 844/19S) and 1721-3 (ONF 653/65R, RJA 703R) have been sold by auction in Manchester recently. Volvo B10M/Berkhof Excellence 364 (M364 SNB) is re-registered RYV 77.

First Badgerline FG

New coaches are Dennis Javelin/Plaxton Expressliner 297-9 (R297-9 AYB), whilst it is confirmed that there are 19 new Volvo B10BLEs, the last being 1920 (R920 COU); there is no 1911. Four of the 26 new Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine IIs due for City Line are to be allocated here, to Weston.

Volvo B10M 2510 (D510 HHW) is re-registered PSU 527.

The wholesale slaughter of remaining Bristol-ECW stock at Bath is due to have taken place, with the loss of 16 VRT/SL3s — 5529/33/7/41/2/4/6/50/3-9/63 (DHW 351W, EWS 741/5/9/50/2/4W, STW 26W, KOO 791/3V, LBD 922V, FPR 906T, STW 29, 31, 32W, XHK 222X). These are being replaced by Roe-bodied Leyland Olympians only marginally newer, cascaded from Lawrence Hill Cityliner stock, first reported being 9501-5/15/26/7/35/6/8/41/2 (JHU 900-4/14X, LWS 42, 43Y, NTC 134/5/7/40/1Y). Just three VRs will then represent the Bristol-ECW marque in the City — 5534/51/62 (EWS 742W, KOO 792V, XHK 221X). However, the Glastonbury Festival saw VR 5523 (PEU 518R) brought out from storage at Weston-Super-Mare to assist before disposal.

Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken redundant Iveco 49.10s 7573-5/89/94, 7601/4-7/9/11 (E573-5 NFB, F589 OOU, F594 OHT, F601/4-7/9/11 PWS), Leyland National 2s 3518/35 (AAE 662V, BVP 819V) and VRs 5517-9/45/65 (PEU 517-9R, EWS 753W, XHK 227X), recorded here as most of these had been stored at Weston.

First Bradford FG

New Scania L113CRL 8438-42 are in service, with 8443-6 (S443/7/5/6 BSG) newly arrived to replace the original 8443-8 sent north to Midland Bluebird.

First Calderline FG

First of a new batch of Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814s, in fleet livery, are 2405/6 (R405 WWR, S406 GUB).

First Capital FG

The desire to have the first S-registered vehicle on London's streets reached remarkable lengths, with new Dennis Arrow/East Lancs Pioneer H49/27D 452 (S452 SLL) being driven to Trafalgar Square on trade plates, in order to make the 00:00 departure on night service N20 at the last stroke of Big Ben!

Meanwhile, MCW Metrobus 306 struck a low bridge in Lordship Lane when running dead off service 91, only for Volvo Olympian 242 (P242 HMD) to do the same of service 67, but was only lightly damaged through being lower height. The upper saloon of Dennis Dominator 182 (J182 HME) was gutted by fire in Walthamstow recently also and Dennis Arrow 410 (P410 PLE) has been struck from behind by a lorry, such that it has had to go away or remedial work.

The last yellow repaints were 129/60/2 and 282 and 165 was changed to red as it was under repaint at the takeover, with 134 following. Sadly, AEC Routemaster 929 (XMD 81A, WLT 429) was not part of the deal with First Group and has been sold to Capitalise of Battersea.

Thamesway Mercedes-Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess B23F 245/6/54/6-8 and 394 (F245/6 MVW, F254/6-8 RHK, H394 MAR) have been on loan for service D8.

First CentreWest FG

The 30 Dennis Trident 2/Plaxton President low-floor double-deckers on order for June next year will replace Metrobuses on service 18. They will also appear on night bus services N18 and N23, and Sundays on service 23. Eighteen more dual-door Marshall-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs are due for service 92 in November this year.

The last two Marshall Minibus 2/B26F have arrived at last; they are ML102/10 (R102/10 VLX). As LOTS comments in its excellent publication *The London Bus*, ML110, the last of the lot, arrived 15 months after the service for which they were needed began.

Marshall-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs R677-80 MEW are numbered DML249-52 and have been re-registered 809-11 DYE, 292 CLT respectively.

Prior to disposal, Mercedes-Benz 811D MA101 (VLT 31) was re-registered F455 TOY. Further withdrawals are of MA53 (F953 BMS), 66/9, 80/2-4/6/9, F666 XMS etc) and Renault S75s RW56, 61 (HDZ 5456/61). MA66, 80/2-4 have gone to Western National while Renault S75s RW55, 61 have been sold outside FirstGroup, to Lame's Minicouches, Cumnock, and Autocar, Five Oak Green, respectively. Another Wright-bodied Dennis Dart to go to Eastern Counties is DW76 (JDZ 2376).

Bristol LH6L BL81 (OJD 81R) has been sold to a private buyer for preservation; Mercedes-Benz 811Ds MA45, 48, 66, 101 (F645/8/68 XMS, F455 TOY) to Western National; Dennis Darts DW18, 25, 38 (JDZ 2318 etc) to Eastern Counties and DW43 (JDZ 2343) to First Capital.

First CityBus FG

Leyland Atlanteans 218/20-3/6/7/30 (MCR 218R, PBP 220-3/6/7/30S) are withdrawn and most have cannibalised and will be broken up on site.

Former Plymouth Atlanteans 119/21/6-8 (OCO 119S, STK 121/6-8T) have also been withdrawn, passing to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) for scrap, whilst AEC Regent V BOW 507C has been noted at North East Bus Breakers, Annfield Plain (dealer) after apparent cessation of use by East Yorkshire as a driver trainer.

First CityLine FG

Healthy investment in new double-deck stock is to bring 26 new Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine IIs into stock for Lawrence Hill, of which four will go to Badgerline. The CityLine examples are due as 9665/7-87. Six Plaxton Pointer 2-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs are also due, for services 51/54, upon which the City Council has increased kerb heights in readiness.

An additional Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 2 is 1718 (R718 BAE), whilst the LPG gas-powered SLF is 1719 (R719 BAE), with Pointer 2 body and in Centaur blue livery, with less prominent gas pod than sister 1548. However it was depicted in *Buses September* (p14) carrying the (non-Bristol) registration R719 RAD.

Rather unfamiliar further new vehicles are left-hand drive battery-electric Technobus Gilliver/B9F 8101/2 (R101/2 DTC), which can work for seven hours after charge-up and can reach a maximum speed of 24 mph. They are at work on service 905 from Tollgate car park. Recently-borrowed P10 LPG is a Shell-Gas demonstrator.

Mercedes-Benz 709D 7802 (L802 SAE) is transferred to Badgerline at Bath. Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine IIs 9661-4 (R661-4 NYH) are H47/29F, not H43/29F as first reported.

The new Olympian influx is sadly to see the virtual elimination of the Bristol-ECW marque from its native city (as well as with Badgerline in Bath, by cascade). Due to be withdrawn by the autumn are VRT/SL3s 5073 (MOU 747R) and 5147/9-51 (AHW 198, 200-2V), but 5140 (AHU 517V) is to be transferred to Durbin stock, as are the pair of Badgerline VRs which have been recently on loan to CityLine at Lawrence Hill. 5531/60 (EWS 739W, STW 33W). Of the other three Badgerline VRs on loan, 5545 (EWS 753W) — the last VRT/SL3/680 to retain its Leyland O.680 engine and standard 6LXB variant 5146 (AHU 523V) have been withdrawn, whilst 5565 (XHK 227X) having been under heavy cannibalisation, the first X-registered VR to go.

Happier news on the Bristol front is that preserved Bristol RELL 1071 recently returned to Lawrence Hill for a full brush repaint into Bristol Country-style NBC livery. CityLine still paints its vehicles by hand and with longstanding craftsmen at work, enquiries from other vehicle owners are welcome (c/o Mr Jones, Enterprise House, Lawrence Hill).



First Cymru FG

Further new minis are Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/Plaxton Beaver 2 481-90 (R481-90 EDW), for which seating capacities are not confirmed.

Volvo B10M/Plaxton Expressliner 2 C46Ft 104-6 (K386-8 DWN) are on loan from RoadLease as is similar, but Expressliner I C46Ft 101 (J50 DTS). Volvo B10M/Plaxton 3500 C48Ft 195 (H202 CRH) ex-York Pullman and B10M/Plaxton Expressliner C46Ft 196 (H236 DTR) ex-Priory are also in stock here.

Further Mercedes-Benz L608Ds withdrawn are 213/4/20-5/7/9/32, along with 709Ds 412/4/7/23-6-8-30/51/2, but 430 (H825 ERV) has been reinstated for the McArthur Glen contract.

Withdrawn Bristol VRT/SL3s 959/77/82 have been sold to Thomas, Porth, similar 954/61/71/4/85, Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 208/8/25/6 and Leyland Nationals 795, 801/6/10 to Wigley, Carlton (dealer) and Leyland Tigers 118-23 to Kirby, Anston (dealer).

First Eastern Counties FG

Further new midis are Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 2 B37F 485 (R685-9 DPW), all in First livery. New Scania L113CRL/Wright Axcess Ultralow B37F 551-4/6 (R551 CNG etc) are in a green livery for the Norwich-Postwick service and have been supplemented by 559-64 (R259-64 DVF) in First pastel, route-branded for services 21/22 and based at Surrey Street.

Further ex-CentreWest Dennis Dart 8.5SDL3003/Wright Handybus B26F to arrive at Norwich are JDZ 2318-21/5/33-8; first refurbished, upseated to B31F and placed in service is 490 (JDZ 2319). The London Transport RF-style inclined driver's windscreens has been replaced by a vertical glass to match the nearside. JDZ 2337/8 are next to go and are expected to go to Banana services in Great Yarmouth. Further acquisitions are former Thamesway City Saver Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Premiere 320 C53F N617/8 APU, now at Norwich (fleetnumbers to be confirmed).

The former Greater Glasgow Leyland TL11-engined Leyland Olympians with Voith transmission have been slow to appear, only 99 and 100 (KGG 158/9Y) being reported in use thus far.

Refurbished Leyland National 2s 610/2/4/20/2/41 (PEX 610W/2/4W, MDS 860V, AST 155W, A201 YWP) have become redundant and are delicensed. Similar 602 (KVG 602V) caught fire at Wymondham and is believed withdrawn as a result. Former CentreWest Mercedes-Benz 811Ds F604/6/7/35/62/4/5 XMS are stored with the Leyland National 2s at Surrey Street, these being partly cannibalised. F603 XMS being derelict at Vulcan Road. Further Bristol VRT/SL3s delicensed are 212-4/32 (WWY 122/3/18S, JWT 762V).

A clear-out of withdrawn stock has seen Leyland Tigers 1, 2 (A696 OHJ, HHJ 372Y), Leyland Fleetline 341 (ODJ 341R) and Leyland Leopard 347 (GSX 855T) pass to Stephenson, Rochford (dealer); AEC Swifts 79, 83 (WEX 679/83M), Bristol VRT/SL3s 171/8, 215/26, 331-4 (MEX 768P, NAH 141P, BRF 691T, DEX 226T, KKE 731-4N), Leyland National 2s 601/3 (KVG 601/3V) and Mercedes-Benz 608Ds 735/8/69 (D505/35/43 FAE) pass to Wigley, Carlton (dealer); VRTs 134/65/80/1/4/94, 311 (RAH 134M, MCL 941P, OEL 236P, OPW 181P, ODL 657R, TEX 404R, CJO 471R), Leyland National 2s 613/6 (PEX 613/6W), Ford Transits 851/2 (E851/2 PEX), Ivec 49.10s 1081/99 (F702/4 MBC) and Leyland National 1778 (CCL 778T) to Spall, Dallinghoo; VRTs 163/4/76/85/6/93, 211 (OUP 683P, MCL 940P, NAH 139P, ODL 658/9R, TEX 403R, YNG 211S), MCW Metroriders 781/6/7 (D604 AFR, E43, 44 OAH) and Leyland National 1774 (CCL 774T) all to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer); VRTs 170/83/97, 217/45, 314/39 (MEX 769P, WDM 345R, TEX 407R, BCL 217T, GRA 841V, OCK 994K, RVF 36R), Dennis Javelin 513 (H613 RAH), Leyland National 2s 608/26/7 (KVG 608V, UVF 626/7V), Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 708/9/18/20/3/6/9/31/4/6/45/52/9/60/2/66/8 (C208/9 PCD, C718/20/3/6 BEX, D529/31/04/36 FAE, C745/52 BEX, D507 FAE, D240 PPU, C232 HCV, D546/2 FAE), Metrorider 784 (D610 AFR) to Jordan, Coltishall. VRT/SL3 207 (XNG 207S) is transferred to ancillary stock as a trolley vehicle, whilst L608D 742 (C742 BEX) is in use similarly as an engineers' runabout.

First Eastern National FG

Another Volvo Olympian YN2R18Z/2/Northern Counties Palatine H47/29F taken into stock from the Rider group is 4315 (L315 PWR), based at Colchester.

The recent Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814s 411-9/21-8 (R411-9 VPU, P701-8 PWC) are being transferred to Scotland, to be replaced by the majority of Colchester's existing Mercedes-Benz minis (these being ousted by Dennis Darts returning off-loan to MTL). The most recent new Varios were diverted to First Calderline and 423/4/6 at least are now with First Glasgow.

Bristol VRT/SL3 3229 (PWY 44W) has been withdrawn for disposal and 3226 (DWU 298T) is relegated to Reserve status. Leyland Tiger DPs 1001/3/4 (EWR 651/3Y, A660 KUM) have been withdrawn and sold to Northampton. Scrap VR 9800 (SWW 305R) has gone to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer).

Group codes

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NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction

Once displayed at the 1988 Motor Show, London & Country's first Dennis Dominator, F201 OPD, is now with Bryn Melyn Motor Services. It is seen in Llangollen. TONY WILSON

First Huddersfield

More Leyland Atlanteans received from Manchester are AN68D/1R/Northern Counties H43/32F 6454-6 (ANA 536/57/60Y).

First Leeds

New are Dennis Dart SPD/Plaxton Pointer B41F 3336-40 (R336-40 HYG) in First livery for use on service 18 (Leeds-Garforth). 3336 has been on loan to Leicester. 3337 being used at Bramley on services X32 to Sheffield and M62 to Halifax and then the Leeds & Bradford Airport service 757, whilst 3338-40 have been despatched on loan to York!

First Manchester

Further single-deck deliveries are Volvo B10BLE/Wright B41F 621/3-55 (R621/3-75/29 34 55-36-51 CVR, S652-5 RNA), all in First livery, of which 621 has gone on loan to Greater Manchester PTE. 622/3 are on loan to Wigan, 624-6 are on loan to Bolton, 627-33 allocated to Manchester. 634-51 to Bolton and 652-5 stored at Bolton.

Mercedes-Benz O 405N-UVG B48F 555 (R280 SDT) is on long-term demonstration loan. Acquisitions from London's CentreWest are Mercedes-Benz 811D/Alexander B28F F636 40 2 XMS and similar, but B26F, VLT 71 (F601 XMS), although the latter was another summarily despatched out of stock without use here.

Withdrawn are Leyland National 2 163 (CKB 163X), MCW Metrorider 1575 (E12B RDW), Renault-Dodge S56 1984 (E984 SJA), Leyland Atlanteans 4189, 4213, 4330/5/82, 4433, 4500, 4634 (VBA 189S, ANA 213T, MNC 530 5W, ORJ 382W, SND 433, 500X, ANA 634Y), Leyland Fleetline 4946 (WWH 947), along with MCW Metrobuses 5059/90, 5113/77/85 (MRJ 59W, ORJ 90W, SND 113X, ANA 177 85Y). The remaining 14 Atlanteans based at Manchester (4536 58 78 81, 4610 4-5 19 28 33 45 50 9 70 6 86 92) have been transferred en-mass to Oldham, exchanged for 14 Metrobuses (5039 56-61 2 4 8 87 8, 5105 13/4 26 8 49-52-76 8 81).

Atlanteans 4642 50 8 (ANA 642 50Y, A658 HNB) and Metrobus 5520 (UWW 520X) are converted to driver training vehicles.

First Northampton

Volvo Citybus B10M-50 Alexander RV DPH47 35F 122 (K122 URP) has returned from its East Lancs with a new Pioneer body following accident damage last year. It is re-registered WSU 780 and wears ivory and red fleet livery. Since delivery, it has almost exclusively been used on the special service to Althorp for visitors to the family home of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Soon after the return of 122, similar 89 (H289 VRP) sustained accident damage and is out of use pending a decision as to its future.

Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown Flotline demonstrator R460 VOP has been on loan, whilst Northern Counties Paladin-bodied Dennis Darts M387 9 KVR were only here for just a month. Not previously recorded were the arrivals for 'flood relief' of further Scania 8027 (H627 VNW) from Leeds, Leyland Tiger Duple Dominant III 63 (YPD 103Y) from Mainline along with Dennis Dominator KKU 112W and Leyland Nationals LMA 413T and EMB 362S.

Major service revisions on 10 August saw the acquisition of former CentreWest Renault S75 Wright B28F 708/11/2/4 (HDZ 5488 72 3 8), whilst Renault/Northern Counties H751 ENR is undergoing preparation for use.

The remaining Leyland Leopards, 21, 23, 25 and 26 (GSO 81V, FRX 888T, GMS 297S, ULS 328T) are reported withdrawn, following the decision to adopt Green Diesel, with which they are apparently not compatible without expensive modification. In replacement come Leyland Tiger TRBTL11/Duple Dominant DP47F EWR 651-3Y, A660 KUM from Eastern National, but they are expected to be reseated to B53F or B55F prior to use.

Bristol VRT/SL3 54 (CNH 54T) has been withdrawn following chassis failure.

First PMT

New arrivals are Scania L113CRL/Wright B40F SSS813/6/7 (S813 AEH etc), with more expected as SSS814/5/8-21 (S814 AEH etc), along with Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/Plaxton Beaver 2s as MMM259-70 (S259-70 AFA) — all for Adderley Green. Delivery of Optare Solos is due in April next year.

Leyland Leopards SLL288/91 (GWU 528T, BVP 775V) have been sold to PVS. Carlton (dealer).

First Provincial

All remaining Mk1 Leyland Nationals are due to be retired by the close of the year, new deliveries permitting, with the last Leyland National 2s to go by late-1999.

First Thamesway

The last Bristol, VRT/SL3 3113 (XHK 218X), has been treated to a full repaint in latest livery at Hadleigh — notable as repaints have not been made here for some years and also as having been the last maroon and yellow vehicle. Leyland Olympian 4005 (C711 GEV) is in service at Hadleigh also, after a while out of use. Highbridge Leyland Olympian 4022 (TPD 105X) is reallocated to Basildon, whilst Leyland National 1803 (TJN 508R) is due for early withdrawal. Volvo B10M-62s 617/8 (N617/8 APU) have been transferred to Eastern Counties. Leyland National 1845 (WJN 565S) has gone to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

First Western National

Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/3R-Alexander TE C53F 2224 (HHJ 373Y) is in stock, new to Eastern National and at Plymouth. Leyland Leopard PSU3E 4R/Duple Dominant C53F 3581 (HVG 803V) is in stock ex-Northampton for training duties at Camborne, replacing 3551 (NTH 156X), currently out of use.

Another CentreWest MA-class Mercedes-Benz 811D Alexander B28F in stock is 5020 (F677 XMS) at Camborne. Similar F668 82 XMS are at Plymouth and which await numbering. First in fleet colours is 5022, reseated to B31F with single-seats replaced by pairs. The others entered service in red as B28F, still with Uxbridge Buses branding — and more are due.

Of the 66 Mercedes-Benz L608Ds remaining on fleet strength, a widely scattered 40 or so are still in regular use, but many unlicensed examples have been deposited at Long Rock, Penzance (along with various 811Ds and Bristol VRs, several cannibalised). The Carlyle-bodied 811Ds are next to be withdrawn owing to poor condition, to be replaced by ex-London Alexander-bodied examples. Amongst the first to be taken out of service are 307/12/20 (H892 LOX, H712 20 LGL) from Penzance, although initially withdrawn 306 (H891 LOX) is back at work, along with 304 (G154 GOL), which was soon withdrawn following an accident.

Bristol VRT SL2 1085 (HTC 726N) is still active at Plymouth in non-standard livery of off-white and blue with red waistband; VRT SL3 1114 (VDV 114S) also continues in traffic despite having been earmarked for withdrawal some time ago. Convertible open-top 941 (VDV 141S), which normally works service 15 (St Ives-Land End) each season in open-top mode, remained roofed this year.

First York

Seven Leyland Nationals were taken over with the services of Glenn Coaches of Wiggington, comprising 11351A/1R B49F NPJ 481R (G/W 2759, NPJ 481R), SKF 6T, WUH 172T, FPR 64V; 10351A/1R/B41F XPC 15S and 10351B 1R-B41F BPL 496T and DPH 499T. Of these, NPJ 481R, SKF 6T and WUH 172T have not been used by York.

Flagfinders, Braintree

The entire fleet of Wiffens of Finchfield (established in 1919) has been acquired as well as its school contracts. Taken into stock are Bedford YRT Alexander B53F GSX 115 9 21N (new to Lothian), YMT Duple Dominant B63F ELA 389T, Leyland Cub/B33F C924 DKR and Ford Transit Dormobile B16F C464 BHY. All are being painted in all-over yellow American-style school bus livery.

Fowler, Holbeach Drove

A stylish delivery is Scania N113DRB/East Lancs Citizen H47/31F S333 HEB, named Fenland Queen (last carried by a Duple Vega Major-bodied Bedford VAL14).

The three Dennis Javelin buses new to Diamond of Stanley have been acquired from Go-Ahead North East and are Duple 300 B55F-bodied F556 NGR and G959 WNR, along with Plaxton Derwent B55F-bodied H447 EVK. From the same source comes Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/2R/Plaxton Supreme V Express C53F XEF 11Y, new to OK Travel.

Go North East

Delivery has started of a batch of Northern Counties Palatine 2-bodied Volvo Olympians. Noted so far is 3815 (S815 SVK) with Go Coastline.

Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown 4840 (340 GUP) has carried this registration from new. The refurbishment of Leyland National 2s continues, incorporating split-level entrances, Purno heating, full interior retrim and removal of roof-mounted heating pod. Latest treated are 4670-2/91 and 4703/4 (UPT 670-2V, WPT 691V, FNT 703 4W).

Following de-roofing, ex-London General MCW Metrobus 3511 (WYW 55T) is repaired and back in service at Gateshead.

ECW-bodied Leyland Atlanteans 3538/40 (MBR 438/40T) are reseated to H43/23F to provide greater luggage capacity for use on the continental ferry feeder services from Newcastle Central station to North Shields ferry terminal. Both carry promotional lettering for this service on their existing livery.

Volvo B10M coaches 7058/9 (M58, 59 LBB) are registered JCN 822 and FCU 190 respectively.

The four ex-Classic Coaches Leyland National Mk Is, 4858-61 (NRD 162M, OAE 759R, GOC 732N, DDW 431V) only saw very minimal service (if any) in this fleet and have been quickly withdrawn. Also withdrawn are Leyland Atlanteans 3537/45/56/61 (MBR 437T etc), Leyland Olympian 3576 (JTY 376X) and Leyland Tiger 5127 (G683 JGR).

Renault-Dodge S56 257 (D257 YBB) is with Morris, Pentrelin, 274 (E274 BRG) with MacLennan, Laxy Lochs, former demonstrator 291 (E38 OMS) returning to Scotland with Stewart of Portlethen, 293 (E293 ETY) appearing with MC Coaches of Melksham. Former Diamond Plaxton Derwent-bodied Dennis Javelin 4798 (H447 EVK) is with Fowler of Holbeach Drove, unused ex-Redby Alexander-bodied Dennis Lancets 4799 and 4800 (A502/3 FSS) being dispensed with to Ramm, Sudden (dealer), 4799 as a source of spares. Leyland Tiger 5101 (C101 PCN) is with East Yorkshire for further service. Full-height Bristol VRT/SL3/501 3329 (TUP 329R) is in the care of a preservation group based at Hetton-le-Hole after use in Wales, latterly with Jones of Llanfaethu.

The new garage at Sunderland is now fully operational, the former tram depot at Philadelphia — the original home of the Sunderland & District company, along with Sunderland Park Lane depot have been closed as a result, the latter already demolished for development.

Green Triangle, Bolton

Although the company address is Bolton, the garage and operations are based at Tyldesley near Atherton, with commercial and tendered services in Wigan, Leigh and Atherton areas and school services in Wigan, Leigh, Walkden and Bolton which are operated by larger vehicles. Fleet livery is yellow and blue.



New to East Yorkshire is this Plaxton Beaver 2-bodied Mercedes Vario, 453 (R453 PRH). LES PETERS

Apart from the two new Mercedes-Benz Varios already mentioned, the current fleet of this new operation comprises Volvo B10M/East Lancs B55F rebody HIL 7467, MBZ 6454 ex-LDT, Luton; Leyland Tiger TRBTL11/2R Park Royal H36/28R is RM2213 (CUV 213C), which joins ex-Black Prince RM441, 2060, 2122 (LDS 341A, WLT 441; ALM 60B, CUV 122C) in service here, although one of these is thought inactive.

Kimes, Folkingham

Additions from Oxford Bus Company are H44 26D Leyland Titan TNLXBs WAZ 8276-8 (NUW 661Y, OHV 711Y, KYV 519X)

Lancaster Bus

Former demonstrator Volvo B58 Duple Dominant B53F JSJ 429W is in stock, along with MCW Metrorider B23F D646 NOE, similar E979 DNK, DAF Van Hool Alizee C48Ft A7 HOU and Leyland Leopard PSU3G 4R Duple C49F PSO 32W (TSV 722, ORS 110W)

Freight Rover Sherpa D911 MWT, D134 NON and E105 SOG have passed to Houston Ramm, Sudden (dealer)

Leroy, Barway

Former Huntingdon & District Bristol VRT SL3 6LXB ECW H43 31F FDV 809V is in stock in blue white livery. Northern Counties-bodied VRT SL3 RDC 103R is being cannibalised, whilst ECW-bodied OCY 913R has been sold

London Central

Further new Volvo Olympians are Northern Counties Palatine H47 27D-bodied NV98 9 (R398 9 LGH). A flurry of re-registrations see Dennis Darts DW45-8, 52, 66 (545 CLT; WLT 346, 470, 548; 352 CLT; 166 CLT) become G554 2 60 51-70 SGT, H881 BGN respectively; Leyland Olympians L95, 138, 261 (VLT 29; WLT 838; 2 CLT) to C95 CHM, D138 FYM, D261 FUL; Volvo Olympians NV2, 8, 29 (M402 8 RVU, NS29 LHG) to 2 CLT, WLT 838, VLT 29 respectively.

The ECW-bodied Leyland Olympians have all been withdrawn and sold. London Central had only 15 of these: they were L34, 39, 40, 84 8 9, 90, 93-5/6, 100 1 (C34 CHM etc), L138 (D138 FYM) and coach-seated L261 (D261 FUL). The last four in service were L88, 95/6, 261. They have gone to Ensign of Rainham (dealer), whilst Leyland Titans T1020 49 (A620 49 THV) are now with Dunn-Line of Nottingham.

Grey, Ely

Bristol VRT-SL3/6LXB ECW H43 31F FAO 418V is in stock, the first of its type owned here, ex-Huntingdon & District. Initially in Stagecoach United Counties colours, it is due to gain two-tone green and cream livery.

Halton Transport

The latest new Dennis Dart SLF Marshall B42F 1-3 (R712-4 MEW) have enabled Leyland Lynxes 26, 27 and 54 (G222 DKA, G474/3 DHF) to be withdrawn and join former sisters with Isle of Man Transport (qv). Only four Mk1 Leyland Lynxes remain — 11, 37, 55 and 56 (H34 HBG, J250 JWM, G803 EKA, H542 FWM) and four further Marshall-bodied SLFs were due for September delivery to replace these. The 19 Lynx IIs remain intact.

Darts 79-81 (P341-3 OEW) are green and blue, separated by darker blue stripe, but have standard red/cream front ends; their special livery celebrates the new Unitary Authority status of the Borough of Halton (which includes Runcorn and some adjoining village districts).

Delicensed Leyland National 2 (MDL 880R) does not carry its new fleetnumber 91 — this is on paper only; unusually, this R-registered specimen has the original flat-style roof-pod, which it has always had with Halton. Sisters 19, 21-24 (ACW 919/21R, BTB 22-24T) also remain delicensed. Leyland Leopard PSU4/1R 98 (KTB 748F) remains in use as a recovery vehicle

Hedingham Omnibuses

New for the coach fleet are Volvo B10M-62 Plaxton Premiere C57F L290/1 (S290/1 TVW). Two more double-decker 'standards' are Bristol VRT-SL3/6LXB ECW H43/31F L288/9 (RUA 461W, DCA 529X) from Arriva Cymru, L289 adopting a pale green 'Kill your speed' livery for a campaign tour.

Dennis Javelin L234 (J245 MFP) has been dispensed with to Bicknall, Godalming.

Holmeswood Coaches

Scania K113TRB Berkhof CH57/16F1 OAZ 9330 (K330 YDW) is in stock ex-Dorset Travel Services.

Hoskins, Stonehouse

An unusual coach acquired is the first full-sized vehicle in the fleet, single-deck MCW Metroliner CR126/2/C51F FKK 845Y from Andrews of Marshfield and new to East Kent.

Iveco FVM 741V and F765 TLB have been sold.

Huntingdon & District Bl

Acquisitions are of Leyland Olympian ONLXB/1R/ECW H45/32F 76-78 (DWW 926-8Y) from Keighley & District, 77 in a special white-based livery for Cambridge Regional College; 296 (G296 KWF), a Leyland Lynx, 864 (B264 KPF) a Leyland Tiger/Plaxton and 415/7 (G915/7 UPP), Mercedes-Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess all ex-Sovereign stock.

Withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 84, 95, 106 (M884/5 CDS, L206 MAV), Bristol VRT-SL3s 203/8/9/17/26/38/44/6/55/89 (CBD 903T, FRP 908T, FDV 809V, FAO 417V, ONH 926V, FDV 838V, VVV 948W, KRU 846W, LFJ 853W, XNV 899S) and Dennis Darts 401/48 (M801 OJW, J648 XHL), along with recently-acquired Olympian coach 66 (B266 LPH), un-numbered Mercedes-Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess G911 UPP and Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tigers A213 SAE and B248 KPF.

The above withdrawals have seen the end of the Bristol VR here, the last in use being 209/17 (FDV 809V, FAO 417V) which both received Huntingdon & District fleetnames — and were the only such VRs 203/44/89 have passed to Ripley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

JP Travel, Middleton

Former Glossopdale Bus Company Mercedes-Benz 711D/Marshall B27F M636 FJF is in stock and full livery. Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B39F R190 TKU is also acquired, having been used by Plaxtons both as a test-bed and as a demonstrator.

KD Coach Hire, Dyserth

The fourth AEC Routemaster Park Royal H36/28R is RM2213 (CUV 213C), which joins ex-Black Prince RM441, 2060, 2122 (LDS 341A, WLT 441; ALM 60B, CUV 122C) in service here, although one of these is thought inactive.

Kimes, Folkingham

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London General

Volvo Olympians re-registered are NV145 6 8 52 66 70 (R345 LGH etc) to 545 CLT; WLT 346, 548; 352, 166 CLT; WLT 470 respectively.

Interestingly, MCW Metrobuses driver trainer M271 (BYX 271V) based in Plymouth was used on a special Park & Ride service in connection with the visit of the Cutty Sark Tall Ships Race to Falmouth recently!

London Pride Sightseeing

A further batch of MCW Metrobuses is in stock, ex-Stagecoach Transit and are former Kingston-upon-Hull DR102/MCW H43/30F LAT 505/6/14V and SAG 517/20/2-4/6-8W.

RT3232 (KYV 961), open-top RT4169 (LYF 228).

Daimler CSG6 UJF 182 and the oldest remaining independent former LT Fleetline DMS33 (EGP 33J) are withdrawn and sold to Ensignbus, Rainham. The virtually unused CSG6 is for sale with Ensignbus Purfleet and the DMS is in Seville, Spain.

London United/Westlink

Fulwell-based VA-class Alexander bodied Volvo Olympians dedicated to service 281 carry slogans which develop the branding concept a touch — such that VA36, 44/8/9, 52/4 carry 'Commuters connect with the 281'; VA32/3/7/8, 43, 50, 53 carry 'Shoppers are sold on the 281' and VA34, 41/2/5/7 and 51 having Educated students use the 281'.

Also new are 10.6m Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B36F DP1-11 (S301-11 MKH) for service R70, several of which appearing as type trainers in advance of the appearance of this class. Further dual-door ones are due for services 555 556 557 and 11 more early next year for the Feltham-Heathrow link service. Those for 555 556 557 will be in a special blue livery. Leyland National LS24 (KJD 524P) has been withdrawn and sold to Thames Valley Training, whilst MCW Metrorider MRL91 (F195 YDA) is with Routemaster Travel, Aylesbury.

Mayne, Manchester

Volvo B7R Plaxton Prima C57F R632 YON has been on loan. Leyland Fleetlines 31 and 34 (THX 601, 594S) have been transferred to associated Barry Cooper of Warrington.

Merseypride, Bootle

Further acquisitions were indeed Volvo Ailsa B55-10 MkIII East Lancs 102/5 (OSN 860 57Y), whilst ex-Avon Prenton Leyland Atlantean/Northern Counties rebody SDC 146H was numbered 100 and MCW Metrorider E139 SNY is 101

Leyland Atlanteans 74 and 79 (SND 462X, AFY 191X) have been withdrawn. 77 (JKW 331W) passed to a preservationist. Leyland Tiger B491 XOW passed to Fleetmaster, Horsham (dealer).

Metrobus, Orpington

New Volvo Olympians delivered are 847/8/53 (S847/8/53 DGX) with East Lancs Pyoneer H47 25D bodywork, the first three of a batch of 13 for route London Transport 119 (Bromley North Station-Croydon Airport), and 859-66 (S859-66 DGX) with Northern Counties Palatine H47 29F for route 320 (Bromley-Biggins Hill-West Ham).

Metroline

The new Alexander (Belfast) H43 25D-bodied Volvo Olympians for service 16 are due as AV23-38 (S233 RLH, S124-38 RLE), to be followed by a batch of 15 10m Plaxton Pointer 2-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs for service 297 in December. AV23-6 (S233 RLH, S124-6 RLE) were delivered in late-August. Sixteen new Dennis Tridents with low-floor Alexander ALX400 bodywork are due for delivery next year.

The first of the unwanted four year-old Northern Counties Paladin-bodied Dennis Lances have at last been sold, these being LN6, 15, 23 and 26 (K306 YJA etc) to Ensign, Rainham (dealer), LN15 and LN26 passing quickly to Servisair for use at Dublin.

Dennis Darts DT108/10/3/5/6/8 (H108 MOB etc) have been withdrawn and sold to Rossendale Transport.

MTL London

The company has been acquired by Metroline. An additional AEC Routemaster/Park Royal transferred was RM1700 (KGJ 167A, 700 DYE), albeit in withdrawn status (ex-service 139) and under cannibalisation.

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EY	EYMS Group
FB	First Bus
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MT	MTL Holdings
NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction



Fowler of Holbeach Drove has a new double-decker; it is S333 HEB Fenland Queen, an East Lancs Cityzen-bodied Scania L113.
GEOFF MILLS

New are 10.2m Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall B28D DML33-47 (R863-77 MCE) for service C11, received in all-over red but which received blue skirts before use; also new are 9.4m SLF/Marshall B32F DMS13-29 (S513-29 KFL) delivered with Metroline's attractive skirts in place and for services 326 and 384.

Scania N113DRB S12 (J812 HMC) is back in traffic after repairs following fire damage; the service-worn class, S11-20 (J811-20 HMC) is not to be sent to MTL North as expected and are to be tidied in appearance and retained on service 84 (with appearances on services 242 and 317 being noted). As with many MTL London vehicles, their dulled overall red has begun to look very poor indeed in recent months.

MCW Metrobus trainer M1393 (C393 BUV) is in an orange recruitment-campaign livery.

Further AEC Routemasters withdrawn for disposal are RM912 and 1804 (WLT 912; EYY 327B, 804 DYE), whilst RM1799 (799 DYE) has also been taken off service. Six RMs remain allocated to service 10 — RM268, 446, 646, 1348, 1971/9 (VLT 268, WLT 446, KFF 257, 348 CLT, ALD 971/9B).

Metrobus M623 (KYO 623X) has been withdrawn and is under cannibalisation at Potters Bar.

Thamesway's Dennis Darts 902-16 (K902-16 CVW) have been returned home following the reallocation of DRL-class Darts from services C11 and 212.

MTL North

The complete batch of new Volvo Olympian/Northern Counties Palatine II H43/30F comprises 0309-15/7/9/21/2/4/6/7/9-32/4-7 (R309 WVR etc) — these are branded the Millennium Fleet and for service 14 (Liverpool-Croxteth), although they also appear on services 4 and 5 (Tower Hill-Kirkby). The vehicles have apparently been very well received, with much favourable comment as to their appearance. An unusual feature of them is a door at the bottom of the staircase, which can be shut to close off the upper saloon. There will be no vehicles numbered 0316/8/20/3/5/8/33 owing to the non-availability of matching registration marks.

Four Plaxton Pointer-bodied Dennis Dart SLF gas buses are due for Park & Ride at Southport.

Former Village Leyland National 6080 (EGB 80T) is now in livery. It is the first Mk1 Leyland National with MTL after something of an absence. Another notable repaint is former Manchester Leyland Titan 2014 (GNF 14V), its Manchester-style indicators making it easily discernible.

MTL North fleetnames are now commonplace, Wirral-based vehicles carrying Wirral Peninsula in similar style.

Disposals are of Leyland Fleetlines 904/8/20/1/3/33/4 (RCH 286R, XRR 291S, SDA 658S, RCH 285R, XRR 296S, VCU 402T, WDA 914T) to PVS, Barnsley (dealer) for scrap, 911/2 (XRR 295/3S) to JC Agencies, Liverpool and 928/9/31/2 (ASD 25-7/9T) to Whiting, Ferrybridge (dealer) also for scrap; Leyland Atlantean 1631 (HTJ 631P) to a new owner in Wallasey for preservation; Leyland Titan 2187 (CUL 187V) and Leyland National 2s 6117/42 (VBG 117V, XLV 142W) to Goodwin, Carlton (dealer) for scrap, 6114/5/27 (VBG 114V etc) to Ripley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap, 6118/20/43 (VBG 118/20V, XLV 143W) to JL Metals, Morecambe (dealer) for scrap, 6141 (XLV 141W) to Morecambe Metals (dealer) for scrap, 6202 (XLV 142W, NHH 379W) also being scrapped but 5283 (GUW 489W) is with Citybus, Liverpool. Dennis Javelin 7033 (HIL 2503) has gone to Hatton of St Helens; Volvo B10M-60 7034 (J34 MKB) to Almar Travel of Chester-le-Street, 7037 (HIL 5697) to East Yorkshire, 7038 (HIL 5698) to Oares of Holywell and B10M-62 7041 (N41 BWM) to WHM, Little Waltham.

New to Go
Coastline is this
Northern Counties
Palatine 2-bodied
Volvo Olympian,
3815 (S815 FVK).
A. D. GLEN



Newport Transport

New Scania L94/Wright Axcess Floline B46F are 10-18 (S110, 211, 112-4 TDW) in a revised livery of cream with dark green skirt. The new L94s are replacing Wadham Stringer-bodied BR112DHs, also 10-18 (RUH 10-18Y).

Nip-On, St Helens

New are Dennis Dart SLF/Marshall B36F R416/7 XFL.

Norbus, Kirkby

Further MCW Metroriders taken into stock here are 1016-8 (D678 NNE, D647/8 MDB) ex-Stagecoach Manchester.

Fleetnumbers allocated are 1001-8 (JTU 581T, AAK 110T, CWG 693/86V, A638 LKO, D632 MDB, LDM 438Y), 1010-5 (PTF 732L, D655 NNE, D601 MDB, D676/7/4 NNE).

North Rider

Bristol RE operation in the North East ceased with the withdrawal of Bristol REL6Ls EHU 386K and LHT 171L, both sold for preservation.

Nova Scotia, Winsford

MCW Metrobus ORJ 71W is re-registered WJI 6162.

OK Travel, Bishop Auckland

Sadly, the news that follows is the last which can be normally given under the OK heading, thanks to regular correspondent Stephen Briggs, which updates this fleet to the full transfer to other Go Ahead group names.

Further inter-company transfers see the arrival of Cummins-engined Leyland National 2 NL116L11/1R/B45F 4675 (UPT 675V), Volvo-engined 4684 (UPT 684V), standard 4698 (FTN 698W) and similar, but B48F, 4699 (FTN 699W) and Volvo-engined and B45F 4712 (FTN 712W), all based initially at Philadelphia, still in Wear Buses colours on transfer from Sunderland & District.

Transfers away of Volvo-engined Leyland National 4826 (NPJ 475R) to Gateshead & District, along with Volvo B10M-60 7042-4 (H142 CVK, H329/30 UWT) to Northern National.

Further repaints out of OK colours into corporate livery are Leyland Olympian 3806 (F106 UEF) and Volvo B6-50 8429 (M429 RDC), both now with Go Northern fleetnames.

Coaches re-registered are Leyland Tigers 7045 (961 KV, 425 BVK, G349 RTA) to 387 FYM and 7056 (C376 PCD, GSK 962, C376 PCD) to LSK 607 and DAF SB3000 7071 (373 FGB, F803 UEF) to UGD 735.

The Go-OK Travel coaching division, Go Highstyle, has been sold to Classic Coaches of Annfield Plain, along with 14 coaches in the shape of Tiger 7045 (387 FYM), Volvo B10M-60 7046 (JSK 346), Tiger 7056 (LSK 607), B10M-61s 7063/4 (527 LPF, CAZ 6831), Scania K112CRB 7065/6 (CAZ 6830/2) and K113CRBs 7067/8 (CAZ 6833/4), Bova FHD12-290 7069 (ESK 912) and DAF SB300DKV601s 7070-3 (WOJ 882, UGD 735, TVE 804, 685 XHY).

The OK name was first used 70 years ago in 1928, but this affectionately-regarded company can trace its to Easter Saturday of 1912. The break-up in 1998 was as follows:

Bishop Auckland-based services and vehicles transferred to Northern General, these being Optare MetroRider 403 (M3 GYP), Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 471-3/9 (M671 RAJ etc), Leyland Atlantean 3452 (AUP 356W), MCW Metrobuses 3489/91/5 (DVR 489W etc), Atlanteans 3539/58 (MBR 439/58T), 3682/99 (TSD 611S, VFT 1997), 3708/19/91-6 (YNL 208/19, SCN 269/84S, AVK 152/5/65/75V), Leyland Olympians 3806-10 (F106/7 UEF, K108-10 YVN), Leyland National 2s 4684/99 (UPT 684V, FTN 699W), Volvo B10M-61 4749 (E107 DJR), DAF SB220 4802 (J202 VHN), DAF MB230s 5131/4/6/7 (D903 EAJ, E906 MDC, 425 BVK, YSU 882), Volvo B6-50s 8405/10-2/8-22/6-30 (L405 GDC, L410-2 GPY, M418-2 PVN, M426-30 RDC).

Vehicles and services based at Philadelphia were transferred to Sunderland District (Wear Buses) at its Sunderland depot, comprising Optare MetroRiders 333/8/41 (J922/8/41 JJR), Atlanteans 3687/8 (VFT 187/8T) and 3703/32 (VFT 203T, YNL 232V), Leyland National 2s 4675/80/98 (UPT 675/80V, FTN 698W), 4704/10-2 (FTN 710-2W), Dennis Darts 8105-8 (M815-8 GFT) and Volvo B6-50s 8431-3 (M431-3 RDC).

Prior to the transfers above, eight new Volvo B10BLE/Wright B44F were delivered to OK stock as 4848-55 (R848/9/56/51-5 PRG), allocated to service 21 (Chester-le-Street & Newcastle) with on-hire to Classic Coaches labelling. They are now in Northern General stock. Also prior to the final transfers, Volvo B6-50s 8423-5 (M423-5 PVN) were transferred to Gateshead & District.

More withdrawals are of Leyland Leopards 4832-4 (LBO 79X, PWO 90, 91Y), the last Leopards for OK and sold to North East Bus Breakers, Annfield Plain (dealer). Also gone sadly is the unique rear-engined Leyland Tiger TRETL11 with ECW B51F 4830 (Q723 GHG), built in 1985 for service in Bangkok as a dual-door vehicle, but extensively rebuilt for UK service as single-door.

Original Round London Sightseeing Tour, London

Yet another Arriva group company to change name — this was Arriva London Coaches.

A further fleet of 18 Metrobuses is due into stock for conversion to open-top over the period between September this year and December next — which will presumably see the despatch of the remaining Routemasters.

Oxford Bus Company

Leyland Titans 956/60/8 (KYV 519X, OHV 711Y, NUW 661Y) have been withdrawn and sold to Kimes Coaches, Folkestone, and have been re-registered WAZ 8278/7/6 respectively. Meanwhile 975 (A869 SUL) has gone to the Oxford Bus Museum. ECW-bodied Leyland Olympians 202/6/14 (VJO 202/6X, BBN 214Y) have been transferred to Wycombe Bus Company, from which fleet Alexander B28F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811Ds 708/18 (G108/18 PGT) have been withdrawn.

Phoenix North West, Blackpool

New are Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/Plaxton Beaver 2s 817/8 (R107/8 GNW) in distinctive Blackpool Transport HandyBus black/yellow. Indeed one was illustrated in *Buses* September and inadvertently credited (by the editor) to Blackpool Transport.

Dormobile Routemaker-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D 807 (L807 YBC) hit the headlines in Preston when it shed its rear axle in Preston in the morning peak; fortunately, there were no serious injuries.

Pilkington, Accrington

Leyland National TOF 638S has been acquired from Britannia of Telford and is re-registered PIL 2086 and numbered 86. Leyland Tiger TRCTL11/2R/ECW DP49F 514 (TJI 7514) is confirmed as originally registered TPC 11X.

The entire fleet, bar Renault-Dodge 22 (D422 NNA) is re-registered and allocated fleetnumbers, confirmation of which follows, viz (courtesy of the Ribble Enthusiasts Club):

7 (PIB 5507, HJA 129N); 14 (PIB 7014, MCA 675T); 23 (PIB 5823, VKU 73S); 33, 34 (PIB 4033, 6434, JTU 582T, WFR 392V); 51/2/6 (PIB 9051, 5952, 7256, VBG 95V, BNO 669T, YDW 401T); 67 (PIB 6667, CNB 432M); 86, 88 (PIB 2086, 3488, TOF 638S, BVP 766V); 90 (PIB 4290, D898 DSP); 125 (PIB 1125, SND 88X); 301 (PIB 8301, APT 891S).

Pioneer, Rochdale

Ex-Mainline Renault-Dodge S56/Reeve Burgess E181 UWF is in stock.

Plymouth Citybus

New Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer 2 B40F 113-26 (R113-26 OFJ) are at work on Plympton/Plymstock area services in SuperRider low-floor livery.

Preston Bus

Several full-size low-floor saloons are expected for delivery in 1999, thought to be seven in number.

The final new Optare MetroRiders, 39 and 40 (R439/40 RCW) are route branded as expected for the Riversway Park & Ride service, displacing older sisters 3, 4 (M403/4 TCK), now part of the regular minibus fleet. The latest MetroRiders have ousted Renault-Dodge S56s 41/2/4/5, 63 and 66 (D41, 42 AFV, E44 FFV, E45 GRN, D763/6 YCW), reducing the once 52-strong fleet of Renault-Dodges to just 13 — 51/4, 61/2/4, 72/3/7, 88-92 (D751/4/6/12/4 YCW, D72/3 AFV, E77 LFR, F88-92 AHG).

Renault-Dodge 86 (E86 MHG) has been withdrawn and sold to Leven Valley Travel, Cleveland, smartly outshopped in its yellow/red livery and shown at the Ribble Enthusiast Club Blackpool-Southport rally before departure.

Leyland Atlantean 178 (DRN 176Y) is confirmed as the Leyland Atlantean chosen to wear traditional maroon/cream livery for the celebrations at the end of September.

Redline, Penwortham

New is Scania L94/Irizar Century R22 RED whilst ex-Arriva North West Leyland National ODM 680V is intended for schools work

RoadCar YT

Former Ipswich Leyland Atlantean 1321 (RDX 11R) is renumbered 3041 and is used as a permanent driver trainer, with upper saloon seating removed and just 16 left in the lower saloon.

Rossendale Transport

Dennis Dart/Plaxton SPD B41F R739 TMO has been on demonstration here, but was actually used by Border of Burnley.

Uncommon Bristol LHS/East Lancs 50 (SND 550X) has been withdrawn and placed in store at Rawtenstall, sister 51 (SND 551X) being dumped derelict at Rochdale. Withdrawn MCW Metroriders 40 and 54 (F113 YWO, E979 DGS) have been cannibalised — only 1-4 (F91-94 CWG) remain at Rochdale.

Ripley of Carlton (dealer) has taken redundant Metroriders 5, 6, 39, 41/3/5, 52/8, 66/8 (D21 CFL, E519 YWF, F111 YWO, E143 YKW, D601 AFR, E481 CNM, E58 KHG, E977 DGS, F168 DET), Renault-Dodge S56s 9, 10 (D859 LND, D901 MDB) and Leyland Atlanteans 48, 197 (ONF 684R, JKW 297W), all for scrap, along with Metroriders 62/3 (F62/3 ARN) for resale, the latter appearing with Titlesure of Bedlington.

Seemarks, Luton

Three new Wright-bodied Volvos are in service. They are S582 VOB, a Renown-bodied Volvo B10BLE, and S583/4 VOB, Crusader-bodied Volvo B6LEs.

W. J. Searle, Hunstanton

Very unusual passenger carrying vehicles still in operation here are 1942 GMC 6x6 amphibious DUKW-353 *Rolls* and 1943 twin *Kiers* (neither registered as they do not run over public roads). The pair may be seen operating tours from adjacent to the Sea Life Centre at Hunstanton daily between April and October. They are almost certainly the very last DUKWs in commercial use in Britain. They are used in full amphibious mode running from the beach into the sea (and vice versa), both on coastal tours and on ferry-bus journeys to and from the company's MV *Sea Lion* which visits Britain's largest colony of sea lions. Both are re-engined from their original six-cylinder GMC petrol engines to diesel units. An entertaining ride is guaranteed! They are also available for local private charter (tel: 01485 535455).

Shaw Hadwin

New coaches are Volvo B10M-62/Jonckheere Mistral R791 NEC and R171 SUT.

Mercedes-Benz 811D/Carlyle B33F G112 TND is in stock ex-Arriva Manchester and was in use initially in Bee Line livery. Volvo B10M-61/Van Hool CH49/7FT HIL 8433 (A853 TDS, VLT 28, A199 WUS) is also in stock.

Volvo B10M/Plaxton H539 SEO is re-registered YFG 333.

Shearings

New are Volvo B10M-62/Van Hool C46F1 905-15 (R905-10, 991, 912-5 YBA) and Jonckheere C50F 9357/45/50-4 (R935 YNF etc). Registrations with numerals 911 are reserved for Porsche cars, hence the odd mark for 911.

Jonckheere-bodied B10Ms 611-30 (M611-25 ORJ, M626 PVR, M627-30 KVF) have been withdrawn.

Shropshire's, Barway

Leyland Nationals TOF 711S and WWN 806T are now owned, being operated by Andrew's Coaches until this local produce company obtains its own operator's licence.

Southern National

Former Brighton & Hove/Brighton Borough Leyland National 2 XFG 27Y is numbered 9055, placed in service still in an advertising livery for a Sussex garden centre. Former Stagecoach Leyland National Mk1 ENJ 913V is numbered 9046 meanwhile.

Leyland National 2830 (MOD 852P) is transferred to Dorchester Coachways and now wears that livery too. Bristol LH6L/ECW 1634 (REU 326S) and increasingly uncommon LH6L/Plaxton coach 3131 (AFJ 692T) have both been busily at work this season at Weymouth.

Stagecoach Burnley & Pendle ST

Inter-company transfers see the arrival of 345 (XRN 45V) from Ribble and departure of 333 (FUH 33V) to the parent company.

Leyland Leopard 1036 (MFV 36T) is converted for use as a towing vehicle. Leyland National 2s 341/50 (BUH 241V, XRN 50V) have passed to Poynter of Wye.

Stagecoach Busways ST

DAF SB220 demonstrator NS97 DWY has been on loan at Sunderland, temporarily numbered 597.

Acquisitions are Optare MetroRider/B26F 1671 (H144 UUA) from East London and sisters 1672-8 (H148/50 UUA, H160/2/70/1/4 WWT) from Selkent.

Magic Bus-liveried Leyland Atlanteans are allocated to South Shields. The last Busways yellow-liveried vehicles remaining in Newcastle are Leyland Olympians 601/4/8/11/2 at Byker and 621/3/34/5/7 at Slatyford, along with Atlanteans 208 and 338.

Dennis Dart 1108 (R108 KRG) has been stored after sustaining accident damage at Holmeside.

Further heavy withdrawals of Atlanteans see the loss of 204/5/8/10/15/9/22/3 (EJR 104W etc), 248/83/90 (SCN 248/83S, UVK 290T), 315/9/29/34/6/8/50/1/63 (AVK 135/9/49/54/6/8/70/1/83V) and 818/38 (OCU 818R, RCU 838S) along with Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 1440/7/54 (E440/7/54 AFT). Leyland Leopard trainer DT17 (EGB 52T) has been withdrawn and is with Stagecoach North West, whilst Bristol LH6L trainers DT12-14 (WEX 929S, TCL 142R, SVL 834R) have gone to United Counties for continued use in this capacity.

Bristol REs 1808/10/1/8 (HPW 522L, YWC 16/8L, JMW 167P) are with Whiting, Pontefract (dealer) for scrap.

Stagecoach Cambus ST

Acquisitions are Mercedes-Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess Beaver DP25F 2305/6/19 (E305/6 BWL, F319 EJO) from Stagecoach Oxford. Leyland Leopard/Alexander 26 (XMS 253R) is an arrival from Transit, in yellow driver trainer livery and for that purpose.

Inter-company transfers see the arrival of Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympians 571/2/8/9 (P571 EFL etc) and ECW-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3s 754/60/72/96 (KVF 245/50V, SU8 792W, KVF 246V) from Viscount, 754 in overall advertising livery for Princebuild, 760 in Peterborough Electric Traction colours and 796 in Peterborough Bus Company livery. 772 has been allocated to Haverhill. Volvo B10Ms 425/31 (G525 LWU, H649 UWR) are transferred to Viscount.

United Counties Leyland Tiger/Duple 116 (VLT 225) has been in use as a driver trainer.

Dennis Dart/Alexander 366 (R366 JVA) is route-branded with Park & Ride logos, with 365 (R365 JVA) to follow. Darts 350-2 (N350-2 YFL) are moved from P&R onto former Millerbus work. Volvo B6 169 (L669 MFL) carries a revised livery for the City Rail Link service, of yellow with red skirt and blue signwriting. Bristol VRT/SL3s 735/9/53 (PWY 37W, URP 949W, VEX 289X) have also remained outstationed at Haverhill, despite the recent moves to bring remaining VRs into urban centres.

Leyland Olympian 516 (F516 NJE) has been delicensed following accident damage.

Now withdrawn are further VRs, 737/45/6 (SUB 795W, VEX 303/4X), displaced by the Viscount Olympians above, whilst 744/51/3 (VEX 296/8/3X) have been displaced by the VRs from the same source, 751 being the last coach-seated VR at Cambridge. Also withdrawn is Iveco 49.10s 951/3 (K171/3 CAV), replaced by the ex-Oxford 709Ds. Withdrawn Ford Transit 2036 (C336 SFL) has been languishing at Cowley.

Premier's Volvo B10M 409 (J409 TEW) is now in Stagecoach colours named *Norseman*, sister 408 (J408 TEW) being named *Marco Polo* and 407 (H407 GAV) is *Invincible*.

The Cambridge Omnibus Society is thanked for providing its journal *Cambus* for 'Fleet News', from which the above and other notes are acknowledged. For details, please send an SAE to Chris Bowles, 14 Dendys, Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon PE18 9EU.

Stagecoach Cheltenham District ST

Mercedes-Benz 709D 706 (M706 JDG) is back at Stroud, converted into a mobile information and driver recruitment vehicle; it has been busy visiting local shopping centres and car parks in the Cheltenham area.

Volvo B10M-60 546 (G546 LWU) has been on long-term loan to Midland Red South, 709D 706 briefly to Cheltenham & Gloucester. Iveco 49.10s 603/4 (R603/4 KDD) have actually passed to Bayline at Torquay in the event, not Devon General as first expected.

Stagecoach Cheltenham & Gloucester ST

Gas-powered DAF SB220GG/Plaxton Prestige demonstrator P10 LPG has been on loan at Stroud and used in service.

Former East London Dennis Darts DAL13, 17-20 (N313 AMC etc) are in stock here as 922/3, 919-21 respectively. Iveco 49.10s 609/10 (R609/10 KDD) have passed to Bayline at Torquay rather than Devon General at Exeter as expected.

Ford Transit 645 (C645 SFH) passed to Wacton, Bromyard (dealer), later going into Bromyard Omnibus stock. Similar 651/9 (C651/9 XDF) passed to Davis of Winchcombe.

Stagecoach Circle Line ST

A further two short-wheelbase Leyland National 2s from Red & White are NL106L11/1R/B44F YSX 932/3W, but YSX 932W was swiftly returned whence it came, without use. The newest vehicles ever owned are Volvo B6-45/Plaxton Pointer B35F 1171, 1078 (M71/8 HHB), also from R&W and as anticipated recently.

Leyland Titan OHV 691Y is dedicated to Cheltenham Park & Ride and Park Campus shuttle services, arriving in LT red, but quickly repainted all-over white with appropriate service branding. All-Leyland Titan TNLXB2RR/H44/27F NUW 636/9Y followed and are also white, but NUW 636Y ignominiously arrived on tow after suffering engine failure on its delivery run. These are also on Park & Ride work.

The last MCW Metrorider has been withdrawn, but reinstated again and is F118 YVP. Its former place on Lydney shuttle services being taken by Mercedes-Benz J407 PRW.

Bristol VRT/SL3 ONH 927V has suffered serious engine failure and is out of use pending a decision as to its future. Leyland Tigers RIW 3364 and WLT 713 have also been taken out of service after engine failures. Cheltenham District's Volvo B10M G546 LWU coming back again to cover. Withdrawn Leyland Atlantean 1137 (AVK 137V) has been relicensed and returned to service, due to the failure of 1113 (EJR 113W). Leyland National VAE 5027 has been withdrawn, similar HEU 122N has gone on loan to Midland Red South as has 1137, but the latter was rejected for use and is expected to be taken by a dealer instead.

Stagecoach Cumberland ST

New are Mercedes-Benz Vario O 814/Alexander ALX100 B29F 90-98 (S190-8 RAO), for Barrow's service 1 (South Walney-Furness General Hospital) and first of a substantial batch of 29 due for Barrow. 90-98 have satellite tracking systems fitted, allowing next-stop information displays on board and next-bus-due information at bus stops.

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton C49F M37 KAC has been on loan from Yeates, Loughborough (dealer), whilst Volvo B10M-55 2224 (P124 XCN) has been on loan from Busways (with native 784 going the opposite way by exchange).

Mercedes-Benz 709D/Alexander (Belfast) B25F 618/9 (K618/9 UFR) are in stock from Ribble, 618 at least being appropriately allocated to new service 618 (Barrow-Amblesea direct).

Leyland Olympian 2203 (J203 HFR) is back with a new upper deck roof and windows assembly after complete de-roofing earlier this year, but is to DPH45/27F layout (ex-DPH43/27F).

Mercedes-Benz 709D 9 (N209 UHH) is route-branded for the Kendal Park & Ride service.

Stagecoach East London ST

Leyland Titan T1128 (630 DYE) is re-registered HVX 7717. Volvo B10M-60/Plaxton coaches VP4, 5, 7 (H654/5/7 UWR) are 630 DYE, WLT 890/8 respectively, their Routemaster marks taken from former private hire coach-seated Titans.

Group codes

AA	Arriva
	Passenger Services
BL	Blazefield Holdings
EY	EYMS Group
FB	First Bus
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MT	MTL Holdings
NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction

The Titan shuffle continues with T490/2, 529 35/6 (KVV 490X etc) and T804 (OHV 804Y) migrating to Selkent, T610 (NUW 610Y) to Stagecoach Oxford, T660 (NUW 660Y) to Stagecoach Devon and T751, 802/19/73, 902/21/2 (OHV 751, 802Y, RYK 819Y, A873 SUL, A902/21/2 SYE) going to Fife. Mercedes-Benz 811Ds SR13, 56 and 75 (F913 YWY, F156/75 FWY) are with MK Metro, SR50 (F50 CWY) passing to Docklands Minibuses, but SR73 (F173 FWY) has been scrapped after cannibalisation at Stratford depot. SR12, 32, 76 and 105/7 (F912 YWY, F32 CWY, F176 FWY, G105/7 KUB) have been sold to an unconfirmed buyer, too.

Stagecoach Manchester

Further new Volvo Olympian/Alexander RL H51/36F delivered complete the batch with 763-78/8-82 (R763 DRJ, S764 SVU, R765 DRJ, S766-8 SVU, S769-76-8-82 RVU) based at Hyde Road (763-6) and Princess Road (767-78/8-82) and earlier 744-62 are also at Hyde Road. This corrects the earlier mis-report of 744-81 en-bloc.

Dennis Javelin 11SDL2133/Plaxton DP47F L105/7 SDY are also in stock from Ribble for service X1 (Manchester-Derby) which have ousted the Scanias previously used on this service. L107 SDY is peculiarly numbered 0001 and has Stagecoach Manchester names.

Volvo B10BLE/Wright Fioline R460 VOP has been on loan

The first of the ex-Stagecoach Kenya Duplo Metsec-bodied Dennis Dragons is repainted, in MagicBus livery, for Princess Road (and services 141/142/143), but its identity is not yet available. They are awaiting replacement windows, tropical-style sliding windows not being considered entirely appropriate for Manchester! Further MCW Metrobuses withdrawn are 5043/4 54 (MRJ 43/4, 54W), 5075/7/9/13, 5100-6-8-10 (ORJ 76W etc), 5106/9 (SND 106 9X), sold to dealers. The first MagicBus-liveried Leyland Atlanteans withdrawn are 4639/71 (AN 639Y, A671 HNB), with Finglands of Rusholme. Leyland National 269 (WFM 817L) has been withdrawn after sustaining severe accident damage. Metrobuses 5154 9 (AN 154 9Y) have passed to Fleet Sales, Haydock (dealer)

The last remaining Localine Renault ST5s are 1726-8 (H726-8 FNC) at Stockport, Daw Bank and in all over white, but orange-liveried Leyland Leopard 82 (SND 82X) is back in service, also at Daw Bank.

Stagecoach Red & White

New Dennis Dart SLF/Alexander B37F 622 (R622 SWO) is in service at Porth, re-registered S622 TDW, another delivery being 626 (S626 TDW).

Former Midland Red South Mercedes-Benz 811D/Wright B33F H401 MRW and J414 PRW, together with DP33F H402 MRW are in stock, with several more expected. Leyland Atlantean 869 (AVK 166V) has been withdrawn and sold to Romney Coaches of Hayes, sister 870 (AVK 173V) passing to Newnham Coaches of Hook, both via West Kent Coach Sales.

Bristol VRT/SL3 860 (KVF 248V) has been granted a reprieve and continues in service, but Leyland National 2s 513/4 (RSG 825 3V) have been withdrawn, leaving just 512 as the only Leyland National remaining (at Aberdare).

Stagecoach Ribble

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton C46Ft 1125 (L125 NAO) has come into stock from Stagecoach North West, whilst B10M-62 Plaxton C49Ft M37 KAX has been on loan from Yeates, Loughborough.

Inter-company transfers see the arrival of 333 (FUH 33V) from Burnley & Pendle and the departure of 345 (XRN 45V) to that base.

Withdrawals to record are of Leyland Swifts 296 7 (H36/7 YCW), Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 618/9 (K618 9 UFR) and 776/91/3 (XSU 906, E91 LBV, E93 LHG), Leyland National 2s 815/35/71 (YRN 815V, DBV 835W, LFR 871X) and 908 (RFS 582V) and Leyland Atlantean 1239 (RGV 39W). 618/9 are with Stagecoach North West, 791/3 with Western, 814/57/8 (YRN 814V, LFR 857/8X) passing to Poynter of Wye, 1213 (WCK 213Y) to Duff of Sutton on the Forest.

The last former Barrow vehicle still in use with either Ribble or Cumberland is Leyland National 2 895 (CEO 720W), exiled at Chorley.

Stagecoach Selkent

The only new vehicle to record is VN110 (S110 SHJ), a Northern Counties Palatine 1 H45 23D-bodied Volvo Olympian. Further Leyland Titans converted to single-door in readiness for despatch to the provinces are T845/54 (A845/54 SUL). Further Titans transferred from East London are TNLXB2RR Leyland H44/24D T490/2, 529/35/6 (KVV 490Xetc), T804 (OHV 804Y), T1128 (HVX 771T, 630 DYE, 486 CLT, WDA 3T).

Fire-damaged Titan T1089 (B89 WUV) has been written off and its remains passed to Greengates of Silvertown for spares. Dennis Dart 604 (N604 KGF) has gone to Stagecoach South and 610/2 (N610 KGF, N612 LGC) to Stagecoach Oxford.

Stagecoach Transit

New Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/Alexander ALX100 355-8 (S355-8 KEF) are in service at Darlington (355/6) and Hull (357/8).

Leyland Titans are continuing into service, latest being 277/9/82/3 (NUW 659-66/75Y, A826 SUL), whilst 272 (NUW 634Y) is renumbered 271 to enable NUW 639Y logically to become 272. 271 is newly in traffic at Hartlepool and 276 (NUW 649Y) at Stockton. The identity for the proposed 288 has changed (again!) to B113 WUV which, with 272 completes the intake. 272/88 are to replace Fleetlines 133 at Hartlepool and 140 at Stockton on entry into traffic.

The influx of further Leyland Titans has enabled the withdrawal of Leyland Fleetlines 129-32/6/7/9 (GAJ 129-32/6V, JAJ 137 9W), 129 being donated to a community project in Stockton. Also withdrawn are Hull Dennis Dominators 211-3 (C111-3 CAT) and Renaults 376-8 (K343-5 PJR). 213 has been sold

Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 353/4 (P353 4 NKH), displaced at Hull by new Varios, are reallocated to Stockton, where they have replaced 811Ds 325/9 (F325/9 XMS), transferred to Hartlepool to allow withdrawal of the last two Renaults, 363/71 (H401 DMJ, J231 JJR).

All four of the ex-MoD Dodge G13/Wadham Stringer Vanguards are re-registered and in service as 15-18 (D155, 216, 157 HHN, C918 AHN, 80-KF-39, 81-KF-09, 80-KF-95, 31-KC-55), of which 15 is based at Kingston-upon-Hull, the others at Stockton

Stagecoach United Counties

Acquisitions to record are Leyland Titan TNLXB2RR/Leyland H44/27F 800/1 (NUW 595/88Y) from East London, first of a batch of 17 Titans due here (thus confirming the fleetnumber for 800 mentioned last month). As the potential vehicles have changed identity from time to time, it has been decided to number them upwards from 800 upon receipt

Withdrawn are Volvo B10Ms 125 6 (A729 8 ANH), sold to Wealden PSV, Tonbridge (dealer). Sadly, also withdrawn and sold are the two of the former Southdown Leyland Titan PD3/4 Northern Counties 'Queen Mary' driver trainers, convertible open-top 1001 (PRX 200B) and fixed-roof 1003 (FCD 292D) both passing to new owners in Worthing, perhaps for preservation?

Stagecoach Viscount

Mercedes-Benz 709D/Reeve Burgess Beaver DP25F 2322 (F322 EJO) and similar, but B25F F734 FDV are in stock ex-Stagecoach Oxford. Volvo Olympians 571/2/8/9 (P571 EFL etc) and Bristol VRT/SL3s 754/60/96 (KVF 245/50/46V) are transferred to Cambus stock.

An exchange of vehicles with United Counties has taken place in order to provide suitable vehicles for Stagecoach Express services X55/X56 (Cambridge-

Kings Lynn/Peterborough). Thus taken into stock are Volvo B10M/Plaxton 468-70 (P168-70 KBD), although Volvo Olympians have also been seen in use on these with 538-40/57/68/70 noted. Moving to United Counties are Volvo Olympians 568-70 (P568-70 EFL), along with 571, only just received from Cambus!

Stephenson, Rochford

Bristol VRT/SL3 convertible open-topper VHB 678S made regular appearances in early September on Southend's seafront service 67 with Ambrosia advertising on its cream/black livery including several windows (non-contravision). It has replaced older ex-Trent permanent open-topper MBZ 7140 (OTO 151R) which is reportedly to be sold. The roof for VHB 678S has unfortunately been broken up, but VHB 677S is presently also in stock, still complete; this has not been used thus far and was noted in 'dealer stock' all over white.

Supreme Coach & Travel, Hadleigh, Essex

Now in stock for schools work are Leyland National 2 NL116L11/1R/B49F BVP 812V, EON 825/9 via Southend/Colchester and MCW Metrobus DR102/21/MCW H43 30F ORJ 91/3W and similar, but DR102/23 SND 121/4X, ANA 153/63Y from Stagecoach Manchester.

Swanbrook, Cheltenham

The third new Dotto land-train is R314 BNP and like the other two is owned by Cheltenham Borough Council and garaged at its Swindon Road base, Swanbrook providing driver and 'guard' for each.

Leyland Fleetline THX 500S has been withdrawn and sold for scrap and sister THX 340S is delicensed. Leyland National XAK 457T has been traded in against three recent acquisitions from London United — MCW Metrobus DR101/9/MCW H43 28D BYX 186V, similar DR101/17 A958 SYE and DR101/18 A703 THV. From North Western has come Mercedes-Benz 811D/Carlyle B33F G103 TND

Tanat Valley, Pontrefelin

Bedford YMQ/Plaxton Supreme IV C35F PRO 432W is in stock, with Tanat Valley fleetnames on its white, yellow, green and pink livery. Former Mainline MCW Metrobus DR104/53s C958-60 LWJ are in white, yellow and orange fleet livery. VW LT55/Optare CityPacer D368 JUM has been advertised for sale.

Tellings-Golden Miller

Due to new Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer B39F S515-7 JJH, along with Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814/Plaxton Beaver 2 B31F S707 JJH, all for the Kingston University contract.



In service with
Reliance, York, is
this recent Optare
Delta, R26 GNW.
MICHAEL FOWLER

Metrobus,
Orpington, has 13
East Lancs-bodied
Volvo Olympians
for LT route 119.

One of the first

three delivered was

848 (S848 DGX).

GEOFF RIXON

Tillingbourne, Cranleigh

The first double-deckers to work on all-day services here are former Londonlinks East Lancs-bodied Volvo Citybuses VE673/8/83 (H673 GPF etc). They are being converted to H45/35F, ex-H45/31F, by East Lancs. Meanwhile a change back to Mercedes is evident in the latest minibus purchases; new are 445/6 (S445/6 JTP), Plaxton Beaver 2 B32F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Vario O.814s.

Duple Dominant C53F-bodied Volvo B10M MIL 1853 (OHE 271X) has reverted to its original registration and has been sold to Applebys.

Timeline, Leigh

Arriva Midlands North is confirmed as recipient of Macclesfield's Leyland Tiger coach 24 (OIB 8606). Volvo B10M-50s 73-77, 80 (H73, 74, 575, 76, 577, 80-84 DVM) and Mercedes-Benz 709Ds 162-5/8-72 (M162-5 LNC, N168-72 WNF), with Arriva North West receiving Warrington's B10M-50s 78, 79, 85-88 (H78, 79, 85-87, 588 DVM) and Arriva Manchester the balance of Manchester and Wythenshawe-based 709Ds 151-4/6/7/66/7/78-83 (L151-4 FRJ, M156/7/66/7 LNC, P178-83 FNF) although service 127 (Cadishead-Stockport) is still operated by Trafford Park base.

Trent Buses

Further new deliveries are of the first of this year's Optare Excels as 154-6 (S154 UAL, S955 NRA, S156 UAL), dedicated to service R5 (Nottingham-Derby) and in a special purple and yellow livery with route branding for it.

Volvo B10M/Alexander Q-type 51 (M51 PRA) is first of the batch 51-55 (M51-54 PRA, M455 TCH) to be repainted in green/white for the Nottingham-Manchester 'TransPeak' service, these having carried route-branding for this since new on red/cream standard livery.

Mercedes-Benz Vario/Plaxton Beaver 2 282 (R282 RAU) is transferred to Barton Buses stock from Trent Buses and carries revised fleetnames accordingly. A fourth Leyland National repainted blue and yellow and transferred to the Kinchbus fleet is 528 (FRA 528V). DAF SB220/Optare Delta 315 (J315 BVO) has been delicensed following an electrical fire.

Leyland National 429 (KVO 429P) has been sold for preservation to the 429 Group and is now part of the collection at the Nottingham Transport Heritage Centre at Ruddington. Less fortunate are the cannibalised hulls of Leyland Nationals 433/5/6/56/69/90 (KVO 433P, NRB 435P, JTH 772P, PRR 456R, URB 469S, XAL 490S), sold to PVS, Barnsley (dealer) for scrap and similarly cannibalised hulls of 434/6/2/73 and 532 (NRB 434P, RTO 462R, VCH 473S, FRA 532V) sold to Spondon, Derby (dealer) for scrap.

UK North, Hadfield

The current fleet comprises former Greater Manchester Leyland Atlanteans UNA 822S, MNC 504/7/23/8W, ORJ 371W and SND 449/54/73X.

Universitybus, Hatfield

Another new B29F Optare MetroRider is R71 BUR.

Warner's, Tewkesbury

Mercedes-Benz 811D/Autobus Classique C29F J56 DJV is in stock ex-T&S, Pontefract, retaining its silver-based livery, with stripe overpainted green. An unusual coach acquired is short-wheelbase 9.5m Leyland Tiger TRTCL11/1RH/Reeve Burgess B277 YSL (LVG 263, B834 VSR) new to Tayside, but a decision as to its operation remains to be taken at the time of writing. Also in stock is former Green Line Leyland Tiger/Berkhof B113 KPF, re-registered B810 XWW, from Stotts of Huddersfield, whilst Freight Rover Sherpa E249 VBW has been acquired from The Elms School, Worcestershire for cannibalisation.

Mercedes-Benz 811D G208 YDL is re-registered LIL 3066, similar J56 DJV becoming BAZ 7386; Tiger/Berkhof BAZ 7386 is 5904 WF. Freight Rover Sherpa F418 BOF becoming AAL 520A. Tiger/Paramount AAL 520A becoming LIL 9271 and Tiger B801 XWW is now 6017 WF.

Leyland Leopard LIL 3066 (BVA 787V) and Tiger SGS 499W have been withdrawn and sold to dealers.

Warrington Borough Transport

New are B25F Optare MetroRider 112-5 (S112-5 GUB), starting a new fleetnumber series and with Super Mini fleetnames on sides and rear.

Dennis Dominator 4 (F104 XEM) is now in standard red/white livery, having carried a mainly white livery advertising the Coachlines subsidiary from new.

It is pleasing to record that 1976 Bristol RESL6G/East Lancs 70-73 (LED 70-73P) remain in regular use — notably these are thought to be the last REs in regular service with their original owners (Southern Vectis retains its closed-top 863 (TDL 563K) which is not in normal service and has recently passed open-top 864 to the Traditional Motor Bus Company, Newport as its 2).

Leyland Atlanteans 12-17 (GEK 12-16V, HED 17V) and Dodge S56 197 (D700 THF) are now stored at the depot. Atlanteans 18-28 (MEK 18-23W, OTB 24-28W) remaining in use chiefly on contracts, but also on mini- and midibus replacement work. Former Blackburn Atlanteans 115-9 (CBV 118/23/19S, LFR 125 6T) are also confirmed withdrawn.

Whipper, Fenstanton

Former London Scania-MCW Metropolitan KJD 271P is back in traffic in the latest livery.

A number of local County Council supported services are being operated in West Huntingdonshire, prompting two coaches to be outstationed in the Rushden area, usually Plaxton-bodied DAFs FEW 225/6Y. The company is also operating service 432 (St Ives-Huntingdon Rail station) again, having won this back from Stagecoach Cambus. Cambus service 115 (Cambridge-Six Mile Bottom) is also operated by Whippet.

Leyland Atlanteans LEW 971P and EAV 811V are allocated to Grafham outstation.

Wilts & Dorset

The pioneering first batch of new Optare Solos is completed by receipt of 2609-32 (R609-22 NFX, S623-32 JRU), based at Poole (2609-13), Ringwood (2614-6) and Salisbury (2617-32).

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The Bristol VRT/SL3 refurbishment programme has resumed again for the winter. So far dealt with are 3456, 4383, 4404/13/4/7/22/4/5/9/31/5-7/48/9/51/3/5 (KRU 856W, URU 690S, BFX 572, 666T, UDL 671/4S, ELJ 214/6/7V, GEL 679/81/5-7V, KRU 848/9/51/3/5W), with a further nine to be treated in the shape of 3454, 4423/6-8/30/2/3/50 (KRU 854W, ELJ 215/8-20V, GEL 680/2/3V, KRU 850W), leaving just eight of the remaining fleet of 36 VRs unrefurbished (4334, 4400/6/7/11/2/6/9), VRT/SL3 4416 (UDL 673S) are being retained in the winter operational fleet to act as float cover for the programme, 4334 based at Salisbury to cover North District, 4416 at Poole to cover South District. VR 3429 (GEL 679V) is renumbered 4429 and transferred to the Low Mileage Fleet on transfer from Blandford to Lympstone.

MCW Metroriders 2301/2/4/6/7/28-30/40/2-5/51/7/7/8/81/2 (E452/3/5/7/8/79-81/91/3-6 MEL, F351 URU, E43, 44, 54, 55 HFE) are transferred to Reserve Fleet status, as are Bristol VRs 3351 (OEL 232P), Bristol LH6L 3858 (AFB 595V), Bristol FS6G open-top 4001 (XSL 228A, 866 NHT) and VR 4399 (YEL 371T).

Inter-unit transfers see DAF DE02LTSB220s 3507/8 (N10, 12 WAL) go on loan to Poole from Damory Coaches, LH 3849 (AFB 585V) on loan to Salisbury from Reserve Fleet, VRs 4382 and 4401 (URU 666S, BFX 569T) go on loan to Damory as its 5064/5 from Poole, LH 3858 (AFB 595V) go to Reserve from Salisbury, MetroRider 2505 (J505 RPR) to Damory on loan from Poole and sister 2533 (K533 UJT) back to Swanage from loan to Damory.

I am most grateful to Wilts & Dorset for continuing to support 'Fleet News' with quality source material, which is always most welcome.

Worth's, Enstone

Worth's had intended to put two S-registration coaches on the road in August, but pressure of work meant that one went on the road in July with an R-plate! They are Plaxton Excalibur C53F-bodied Volvo B10Ms R8 WMS, S6 WMS.

Yellow Buses, Bournemouth

Recent Dennis Dart SLFs 475-82 (R475-82 NPP) are route-branded for 'Super Route 6'.

Volvo Citybus/Alexander 213 (F213 WRU) has been undergoing a rebuild at Hants & Dorset Engineering at Barton Park, whilst East Lancs-bodied Volvo Citybus DP 201 (C201 YPR) has had a rear-end rebuild to remedy corrosion and unfortunately no longer has a rear lower-deck window.

Convertible Daimler Fleetlines 132/4/6/8 (NFX 132P etc) ran as open-toppers this season, 133/5/7/9 (NFX 133P etc) joining for the peak, 140 (NFX 140P) is likely to remain closed-top as its rails were used to convert older Christchurch Buses 111 (DLJ 111L) to permanent open-top. Fleetlines are now normally restricted to Monday-Friday operations, only covering as spares on Saturdays. Leyland Fleetlines 153-6 (ERU 153-6V) are now out of service and are expected to be sold.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

The Island's three active Bedford OBs — J 5149 and J 9151 of Classic Coaches and J 7247 of Tantivy Blue, were all busy on tours this season, correspondent S. Osman noting all three together at the Grand Hotel, St Helier on one afternoon!

Castle Ferries, St Helier

The new identity for the long-established service to St Elizabeth Castle (for many years the preserve of a small fleet of World War II GMC DUKWs) is now Puddle Ducks. The trio of home-built amphibians are also doubly named, J 18280 being Valiant with cartoon character Zephyrus, J 42159 Victory with Walter and J 45360 Vanguard with Charles. Victory and Vanguard are of similar external appearance, but Valiant appears much larger.

Pioneer Coaches

Former Harrogate & District Leyland Swift/Wadham Stringer II C39F 15 (J 14610, E962 NMK) is now named Lady Christine.

ISLE OF MAN

Isle of Man Transport

A further three ex-Halton Leyland Lynxes are in stock — they are LX2R11C15Z4R/B51F 95-97 (MAN 95-97N, G222, 473/4 DKA) and are in service in Halton livery with fleetnames removed.

Group codes

AA	Arriva Passenger Services
BL	Blazefield Holdings
EY	EYMS Group
FB	First Bus
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MT	MTL Holdings
NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction

Reports to be sent, please, to Sandy Macdonald,
12 Morton Gardens, Maxwell Park, Glasgow
G41 4AF, to reach him by 13 November for the
January issue.

Aberfeldy Motors

Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R90 AMS has been given fleetnumber 23.

Allander, Milngavie

Alexander H44/35F-bodied Alisa B55-10 LHS 748V, sold last year to Allison, Dunfermline, has returned to this fleet.

Allison, Dunfermline

More buses joined this fleet in August, reflecting the recent increase in local service work. Interesting additions are B51F Leyland Lynx LX112L10ZR1 D634 BBV and B49F Leyland Lynx LX563TL11FR1 D122 FLS, both ex-Mackie, Alloa; HDZ 5461/74 are Renault S75s with Wright Nimbus B28F bodywork previously First CentreWest RW61, 74 and new in 1990; UPB 348/9S and B41F Leyland National 10351A/1Rs ex-Arriva Croydon & North Surrey SNB348/9; YPL 376/8T are similar 10351B/1Rs ex-Arriva Croydon & North Surrey SNB376/8; EPD 538V is similar ex-Arriva West Sussex SNB538; NOE 536R is a B49F Leyland National 11351A/1R ex-Arriva Croydon & North Surrey LNB36; and UFG 58, 60S are similar 11351A/2Rs ex-Arriva Croydon & North Surrey GF58, 60.

Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M-62 L6 LJA has gone to Mackie, Alloa in exchange for the Lynxes, and Alexander-bodied Alisa B55-10 LHS 748V has been sold back to Allander, Milngavie, whence it came.

More subsidised local services registered from 24 August comprised 81A/81B (Dunfermline-Dalgety Bay, evenings and Sundays) and 81C (Dalgety Bay circular, early mornings, evenings and Sundays).

Vehicles being transferred into Arriva Scotland West from English companies include this rare type for Scotland, a Wright Handybus-bodied Dennis Dart, from The Shires, 852 (M248 SPP), and ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian 889 (CWR 519Y) from Yorkshire. Both are seen in Paisley.

BOTH: MURDOCH CURRIE



Arriva Scotland West AA

The Mercedes-Benz 811Ds from Arriva Manchester have been allocated fleetnumbers 074/6 (G104/6 TND), 094/5 (G124/5 TJA) and 099, 100 (H129/30 CDB) although these numbers were not carried initially. They have been fitted with fareboxes for use on subsidised services 96/97, 327 but were expected to be displaced by new vehicles by late-October.

Previously reported Mercedes-Benz L608Ds D174/1 VRP have been numbered 345/6 and allocated to Inchinnan and Barrhead depots respectively. More buses of this type have been taken into stock from Arriva Cymru comprising Alexander B20F-bodied D959 UDY, D432 UHC, D179 VRP which brings the total from this source up to 31 so far (D959/63/5/6 UDY; D432-9/42 UHC; D80/5, 94/8/9 VCC; D167-75/9/88/9/91 VRP) although not all may be used. D959 UDY has been numbered 338 and allocated to Inchinnan.

Leyland Titan CUL 95V had its centre doors removed at Inchinnan in July, and has been numbered 916 and put to work at that depot.

Wright-bodied Dennis Dart M250 SPP has been numbered 853 and allocated to Johnstone depot. More Dennis Darts which either have, or will soon, arrive from Arriva the Shires comprise Carlyle B40F-bodied H242/4 MUK and Wright Handybus B40F-bodied M247/9/51 SPP; all seven buses of this type are being taken as part of a swap which will see the non-standard Alexander Dash-bodied Volvo B6s 441-7 (M841-7 DDS) moving to Arriva the Shires.

ECW-bodied Leyland Olympian CWR 515Y has been numbered 888, while further examples of this type to arrive by the end of July were 889/97, 904 (CWR 519/8/4Y) all of which are H45/32F-bodied Leyland Olympian ONLX8/1Rs previously West Riding 519/8/4. All four of these buses have been allocated to Barrhead depot primarily for school duties, although 889 at least has been used on McGill's Auchenback-Paisley service.

Another addition in August was 880 (H668 GPF), a Volvo Citybus B10M-50 with East Lancs front entrance (originally dual-door) body, latterly Arriva the Shires 5168, and now allocated to Inchinnan.

August also saw the arrival of four double-deck buses on loan from Arriva Northumbria in the shape of Alexander H44/30F-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30AGR OCU 810/2R and ECW H43/31F-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3/6LXBs APT 816W, PAJ 827X. These buses are numbered 505/6/83/90 by their owner and were being used at Barrhead (OCU 810R) or Inchinnan.

By the beginning of September R438 FTU, a Dennis Dart SLF with Plaxton Pointer I B41F bodywork in all-over white, was being used on services 23/24 but whether on loan or purchased has not yet been established.

The yellow-liveried F&L fleet was renumbered into the main series in July, with the result that the vehicles involved are now Mercedes-Benz 811Ds 325 (G32 OHS, ex-21), 326 (G902 MNS, ex-22); and Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 327 (D438 UHC, ex-23), 331 (LAZ 5785, ex-24), 333 (LAZ 5929, ex-25), and 336 (LAZ 5964, ex-26).

Further to last month's issue, Leyland Olympian 900 has been roofed over at the base of the former top deck window line, and could hardly be described as an open-top bus as a result! It has been renumbered 450 for its new role as a driver trainer.

Mercedes-Benz L608Ds 338/45/6, Dennis Dart 853; Volvo Citybus 880; Leyland Olympians 888/9/97, 904; and Leyland Titan 916 are all in Arriva livery. With reference to last month's issue, the Saints all-over advertisement Mercedes-Benz, which now has an Arriva front, is 252. Leyland Olympian coaches 891/2/8/9, 901/2 have all been given blue-based rear end advertisements for Karrimore.

The first of the Volvo B6s to be transferred to Arriva the Shires was 447 which departed in June, to be followed in July by 445.

Operation of service 4 between Paisley and Neilston passed from McGill, Barrhead to this company from 14 September; conversely, operation of services 21 (Paisley-Renfrew/Govan) and 124 (Paisley-Fereneze Drive) were transferred to the Barrhead depot shared with McGill during July. Following the award of an SPT contract, from 18 October service 23 was extended hourly in the evenings and on Sundays from Erskine to Bishopston, providing a through Bishopston-Glasgow service.

Austin, Earlston

Further to last month's issue, the new Bova coach is registered R760 MYG and not as previously quoted.

Avondale, Greenock

L851 WDS, a Mercedes-Benz 811D with Wadham Stringer Wessex B28FL bodywork, was purchased in August from Marbill, Beith.

Bluebird Buses ST

485 (P377 DSA) is a Volvo B6LE with Alexander ALX200 B40F body transferred to this fleet from Stagecoach Glasgow in August, and allocated to Macduff depot.

More Alexander-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds were transferred to Western Buses in August comprising 260-2/70/7/8/82/7/90/1 (G260-2/70/7/8/82/7/90/1 TSL), while vehicles sold to Houston Ramm (dealer), Sudden, at that time comprised Duple C49F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3E/4Rs 132/5/8 (RRS 47, 50/3R) and 145-8 (CRS 70/1/3/4T). Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M-61s 558 (JOT 646) and 560 (XRY 487) are now with Owen, Chapehill.

Bruce, Maud

E334 DRO is an Iveco 49.10 with Dormobile B25F body which was acquired from Roberts, Culloden last year. Further to the June issue, it should be noted that this operator is based at Maud rather than New Deer.

Buskers, Galashiels

Former Border Courier vehicles J100 BCS and J300 BCS have had their luggage compartments removed; the former, a Mercedes-Benz 811D with Autobus Classique C21F plus goods body and the latter, a Mercedes-Benz 709D with Made to Measure C19F plus goods body, are now C21F and C25F respectively.

Carlton, Glasgow

WDA 930T, an MCW H43/33F-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30AGR, has been purchased from McColl, Balloch and is being used on the Old Kilpatrick-Glasgow Cross service 64.

ABERDEEN CENTENARY

To mark 100 years of public transport in Aberdeen, First Aberdeen held a vintage rally on Saturday 22 August and an Open Day on the day after.

On the Saturday vehicles gathered at King Street depot from early morning before moving on to the official starting point at Great Southern Road for a parade through the city along Holborn Street, Union Street, King Street and Beach Boulevard to the Esplanade. After prizes had been awarded by FirstGroup Chief Executive Moir Lockhead, some of the vehicles were made available for runs around nearby Footdee. About 40 buses and coaches took part, comprising vehicles from past and present Aberdeen fleets; a selection of other FirstGroup vehicles from Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, First CentreWest, and First Midland Bluebird; an unregistered Alexander-bodied Dennis Trident for New World First; and various other preserved vehicles including a selection from the David MacBrayne fleet now based at Stonehaven. Additional vehicles joined this collection at the Esplanade after the parade.

On the Sunday all of the Leyland Atlanteans and Leyland Olympians in the First Aberdeen fleet were driven to the Aberdeen Exhibition & Conference Centre at Bridge of Don for garaging during the Open Day and were watched over by a driver in an MCW Metrorider. This left King Street depot available for the display of the vehicles which had remained from the parade the previous day, together with several more arrivals.

'Bendybus' tours were operated using resident Mercedes Benz 001 from the depot to the city centre; open top tours were provided to the Exhibition Centre by open-top Leyland Atlantean 019; and vintage tours to Guild Street bus station using a variety of vintage vehicles from the rally. A park-&-ride service from the Exhibition Centre was also operated using the City Quick-liveried Optare Prismas.

LANARKSHIRE CHANGES

On 27 September First Glasgow introduced a radically different network of bus services throughout Lanarkshire, replacing that which has grown up over many years of Kelvin Central Buses and Central SMT stewardship of the area. The objective of the exercise has been to offer the public a better and more relevant service.

The company had recognised that in evolving and developing to meet the needs of each community served, the product offered had become a little complex and difficult to understand. It had identified various shortcomings, including lack of co-ordination of services over common sections of route, communities with more than one route through them lacking any common point at which the full choice of buses was available, too many buses going to low-demand areas while too few buses were going to high-demand ones, and that the practice of linking different routes for operational reasons had resulted in drivers not getting to know the routes or the passengers.

The solution to these difficulties has been to develop new, easily understood routes offering more frequent services to main destinations; simplified routes in some housing schemes; increased frequencies on high-demand services and less or no service on others; and revised scheduling with most buses and drivers staying on the same routes in the hope that they will get to know the passengers and vice versa.

The opportunity has been taken to rationalise the situation whereby the First Glasgow No1 and First Glasgow No2 companies have been using the same routenumbers for different services, which has in some cases resulted in two different services of the same number running in the same street. Now, all of the new Lanarkshire services have been numbered in a 2xx series to eliminate this.

The result is a network of some 22 daytime and three night services, the 'core' routes being seen as 201/256 (Petersburn/Shotts-Hairmyres Hospital on a combined 15min frequency between Motherwell and East Kilbride); 240/241 (Carlisle/Eddlewood-Glasgow via Bellshill on a combined 10min frequency); and 267 (West Crindledyke-Glasgow via Cambuslang on a combined 10min frequency and using low-floor buses). All routes are listed in Scottish Fleet News.

The down side is that many routes have been given up either in part or completely, with First Glasgow no longer operating at all to areas such as Longriggend, Greengairs, Glenmavis, Thrashbush, Townhead, Cliftonville, Whinhall, Mossend, North Lodge, Law, Cleland, Coltness, Craigneuk, and Larkhall. Many routes have passed to other operators on either a commercial or subsidised basis, the most interesting examples being the expansion of Whitelaw's Coaches on Hamilton/Larkhall and the Wishaw-Law service taken over some years ago from Irvine's Coaches returning to that operator on a commercial basis. Some more details of replacement services are also given in Scottish Fleet News.

THE GABERLUNZIE BUS

An innovative new bus service in East Lothian initiated with Rural Transport Fund money has been branded 'Gaberlunzie Bus' — the old Scots word for a wanderer is gaberlunzie — to reflect the fact that it is the latest scheme designed to provide a facility in rural areas not served by a fixed bus route.

In August 1994 Lothian Regional Council awarded a five-year contract for operation of a fully accessible bus service in East Lothian under the 'All Aboard' name, now provided by First Lowland. This service has operated on 10 routes, designed to some extent to serve smaller settlements off the main road network. It is now proposed to convert six of those routes to a demand-led service on Mondays to Fridays with the potential to offer every household in the areas covered at least two return trips to Haddington and/or Dunbar for shopping etc.

Intending passengers from isolated houses or farms will have to pre-book the service a day before they wish to travel (Monday travel to be booked on a Friday) using a special freephone number, to ask that the bus will deviate from its normal route to pick them up. Different areas will be served on different days, and return journeys from the destination will also be provided. Each journey will have a set departure time but the arrival time will depend upon the number of pick up points requested along the way. The best route for the bus on any day will be worked out by computer and real-time vehicle tracking will also be incorporated so that a timetable telephone enquiry service can be provided.

Under the scheme, the existing 'All Aboard' services A1-A5 and A7 would be converted, providing the new service for such areas as Aberlady, Drem, East Saltoun, Garvald, Gifford, Gullane, Haddington, Humbie, Longniddry, North Berwick, Ormiston, and Pencaitland. Saturday service A6 (Haddington-Garvald-Stenton-Dunbar) would be retained in its present form due to relatively high patronage, while services A9 (Haddington town service) and A10 (North Berwick town service) would be withdrawn.

First Lowland has agreed to have the existing 'All Aboard' contract altered to allow the commencement of the new service, which will run on a trial basis until the end of the contract period in July 1999. Set up costs for the computer equipment, marketing material and other associated costs have been estimated at £20,000 which will be met from the Rural Transport Fund, and it was expected that the start date would be in November.



One of the more impressive vehicles at the Aberdeen Centenary celebrations was this new Alexander ALX500-bodied Dennis Trident for New World First, the Hong Kong operator which is part-owned by FirstGroup. Preserved Bus 4, on sale now, has more pictures from this event.
P. J. CHANCELLOR

Christie, Alloa

Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Citybus NNA 134W was sold to Campbell (dealer), Bonnybridge in May, and Neoplan Skyliner SJ1 2765 (E499 CTU, SEL 133, E472 YWJ) passed to Burns, Tarves in August.

Coakley, Motherwell

Short-term contracts obtained from SPT to replace facilities withdrawn by First Glasgow from 27 September are for services 101 (Monklands Hospital-Longriggend) and 314 (Hamilton-Bellshill).

Dart, Paisley

Various Leyland Nationals have been re-registered including N2, 3 (ENJ 916.7V) to WJI 9366/7, N5 (UFG 49S) to WJI 9369, and N33 (DPH 502T) to NIL 5371. Alexander-bodied Renault S56 R22 (E622 BVK) has been returned to service.

Short-term SPT contracts have been won from 27 September to replace First Glasgow services as 205 (Fairhill-Hairmyres Hospital) and 213 (Baillieston-Buchanan bus station, evenings and Sundays) while existing SPT service 374 (Clarkston-Paisley) was extended to Glasgow Airport from 18 October.

Essbee, Coatbridge

More Leyland National buses have been purchased by this operator including 1151/2R/0501-B51F HHA 122L; 1151/1R/0402-B49F NTC 640M; and 11351A/1R-B49F OOX 826R, TVP 863S, LUB 900T. They were previously Arriva North East 3601/3/6/7, 3100.

Fife Scottish ST

Carlisle B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811Ds H101/7 HDV were transferred to this company in August from Western Buses where they were numbered 090 85 91.

Alexander-bodied Ailsa 850 (OSC 50V) has been acquired by Stuart, Carlisle. Former Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard FPE43 (WXA 943M) was noted in August being used as 'Andy's Mobile Restaurant' at Ballater.

First Aberdeen

Vehicles representing this fleet and its predecessors which took part in the centenary parade mentioned above comprised Walker-bodied Albion PMA28 79 (RG 1173), Alexander-bodied Daimler CVG6 025 (CRG 325C), Alexander-bodied AEC Swift 22 (JRS 22F) and 56 (SRS 56K), Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard 61 (HSO 61N), Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlanteans 019 (HRS 262V) and 311-3 (NRS 311-3W), Alexander-bodied Mercedes-Benz O.405G 001 (K1 GRT), Optare Prismas 515 (M1 GRT) and 549 (PS49 BSS), Plaxton-bodied Dennis Dart 209 (R209 MSA), and Irizar-bodied Scania K113CRB 096 (P4 GRT).

Vehicles representing other parts of the FirstGroup empire comprised the un-registered Dennis Trident with Alexander body for New World First, which was due to be shipped out to Hong Kong two days later; Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean 765 (HRS 265V) and Wright-bodied Scania L113CRL 520 (S520 UMS) from First Midland Bluebird; Wright-bodied Volvo B10BLE 654 (S654 RNA) from First Manchester; Northern Counties-bodied Volvo Olympian VO158 (R658 DUS) from First Glasgow; Roe-bodied AEC Regent H309 (HUM 401) from Yorkshire Rider; ECW-bodied Bristol VR OTA 290G from Western National; Park Royal-bodied AEC Routemaster RML2735 (SMK 735F) from First CentreWest; and Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tiger STL24 (ERF 24Y) from First PMT.

Not illustrated before is P4 GRT, a Scania L113/Irizar Century in the Grampian Executive fleet of First Aberdeen.
P. CHANCELLOR



Other preserved vehicles which took part in the parade comprised Burlingham-bodied Daimler CVD6 BMS 415, Alexander-bodied AEC Monocoach GWG 472, Alexander-bodied AEC Reliance NMS 358, all originally in the Alexander fleet; Park Royal-bodied Maudslay Marathon GUS 926, Croft-bodied Thornycroft Nippy HGG 359, Duple-bodied AEC Reliance 198 CUS, and Willowbrook-bodied AEC Reliance LUS 524E, all originally in the David MacBrayne fleet; Plaxton-bodied AEC Reliance XSA 620 originally owned by Burnett, Mintlaw; Alexander-bodied AEC Reliance SWS 671 originally owned by SMT; Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard YSG 101 and Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean JSC 900E originally with Edinburgh Corporation; Alexander-bodied Ailsa SSN 236S of Tayside; Duple-bodied Bedford OB KKN 752 of Mayne, Buckie; ECW-bodied Bristol Lodekka JFM 238D latterly with Glenlivet & District; Plaxton-bodied Bedford PJK 846L; and ECW-bodied Bristol MW 1252 EV.

Additional vehicles which appeared later that day comprised former Glasgow Corporation Alexander-bodied Leyland Titan PD2 L163 (SGD 65); Roe-bodied Leyland Olympian 5025 (CUB 25Y) of Yorkshire Rider; and First Aberdeen open-top Leyland Atlanteans 021/3. Van Hool-bodied Scania K113TRB 028 (K24 GVC) did not return to Scania (dealer). Workshops in July as expected. Although it lost its Grampian fleetnames in preparation for this in early July it continued to be used until late August before finally returning south.

The Park Royal H40 32R-bodied AEC Routemaster mentioned above was obtained on loan with a driver and conductor from 19 August. By the following morning it had been fitted with Aberdeen destination blinds and a via display reading '100 years of public transport', and was put to work on summer service 14A (Sea Beach-Hazelhead) in place of the usual Leyland Olympian. On the following day it was moved to busier cross-city service 23 (Summerhill-Heatheryfold) instead although terminating at Mounthoole as a duplicate vehicle.

First Eastern National ECW O33 28R-bodied Bristol KSW5G 2383 (WNO 479) visited Aberdeen from 27-31 August as part of its grand FirstGroup company tour.

In addition to a driver shortage the company is suffering from a vehicle shortage. As a result, Gold Service vehicles are regularly turning up on normal service routes while Leylands Atlanteans and Olympians have been appearing on Gold Service work together with Park & Ride liveried Mercedes-Benz O.405s. Minibuses have been used on busy cross-city routes while full length saloons have been used on midibus routes. Preserved Alexander-bodied Daimler CVG6 325 (CRG 325C) has even been used on school transport contracts and Mairs Coaches Van Hool-bodied DAF coach 742 (JSV 426, J812 KHD) has been used on the Bridge of Don Park & Ride service in full Scottish Citylink colours. After many months in storage, Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean 269 (HRS 269V) was returned to service in mid-September to ease the situation. This bus still carries 'Employee Owned Grampian Transport' fleetnames, but it is likely to be withdrawn again when the new Volvo B10BLEs arrive in November.

The ivory coach livery is proving unpopular with company managers as it shows up all dirt and scratches with coaches becoming very scruffy within months of repaint. No vehicles have received full repaints into this scheme this year other than Volvo B10M coaches 041/4 which have required repainting for a second time.

Removal of the Guild Street roundabout and its replacement by traffic signals in August resulted in the need to change the city terminus of service 7A (Bridge of Don-Guild Street) to nearby Bridge Street; Union Terrace is the destination displayed for this at present. It has emerged that this company purchased a former Alexander bus for preservation two years ago. 1950 Alexander C35F-bodied Leyland Tiger PS1 PA171 (CWG 273) passed into preservation in 1970 but was later stored at the Peterhead depot of Alexanders (North East), Aberdeen. This continued when that company was acquired by Grampian Transport in 1989 but when the Peterhead depot was closed in 1991 the vehicle was sold to Grampian's Engineering Director Gordon Mills. When he was promoted away from Aberdeen in 1996 it was sold to Grampian to secure its preserved status, and it is now to be restored to running order as soon as possible.

First Glasgow

MA213/4 (S271/2 LGA) are Plaxton Beaver 2 B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz O.810s which were new in August as S416/7 GUB respectively but re-registered before entering service. They have been allocated to Knightswood depot and have been noted on service 83 (Partick-Clydebank). Other new arrivals in September comprised SS80-3 (S680-3 BFS), further Wright B43F-bodied Scania L113CRLs in the pastel livery which had not entered service by the middle of the month.

MA203/4-6 (P703/4-6 PWC) are Plaxton Beaver 2 B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz O.814s which also arrived in September having previously been First Eastern National 423/4/6. They are in all-over red although MA203 at least has been noted in use still with blue wheels, as used by its previous owner.

Ailsa A133; Leyland Olympians LO60/1, 75; Leyland Tigers CT66, ST353/74; MCW Metrobuses DM149/68, MB55, 65; Volvo B10Ms SV443, 528; Volvo Citybuses AH22, 78, 100; and Volvo Olympian VO58 are now in all-over red while Dennis Darts MD46/7/9 and Volvo Olympian VO108 have received pastel livery. MB65 was previously in coach livery. Leyland Atlanteans LA1416/7 have been repainted into red and yellow driver training livery ex-orange and black bus livery.

It would seem that the use of Superbus fleetnames is being discontinued as further vehicles to have lost them without replacement are Volvo B10Ms SV415/22/5 and Volvo B10L SV561.

In mid-September Leyland Atlanteans were still being used in normal passenger service, the survivors at that time being LA133/91, 1408/40/52/3.

Strathclyde Police have recently criticised an advertisement which appeared on the rear of buses in this fleet earlier this year. The Smirnoff Vodka advert, applied as a super rear treatment, involved the rear of the buses concerned being made to look very realistically like the front of a London Routemaster (see 'Miller's Tales, Buses August'). The traffic departments of the Police wrote to the bus advertising specialists TDI, complaining about the advertisement and warning that buses carrying it could be a contributory factor in a road accident — with legal implications for TDI. A similar complaint was made about the advert by the Police in Edinburgh.

From 21 July subsidised service M53 (Crossmyloof-Muirhead) was altered to provide improved shopping facilities in the area and now runs between Shawlands and Newlands, the latter terminus being at a supermarket built on the site of the former Newlands bus and tram depot. From 14 September SPT subsidised service 369 commenced between Maryhill/Bearden and Kirkintilloch; this was previously provided by Wilson, Carnwath. Also on 13/14 September, services 43, 53 and 91 were withdrawn but new services introduced comprised 4 (City Centre-Drumoynes), 49 (Govan bus station-South Nitshill/Kennishead), and 56 (Lambhill-Paisley); services 4 and 49 have a familiar ring to them, having been long-established routes operating in the same areas until some years ago.

The new Lanarkshire network referred to above and introduced from 27 September comprises services 200 (Salsburgh-Motherwell), 201 (Petersburn-Airdrie), 203 (Cairns-Glasgow), 211 (Petersburn-Whitehill), 212 (Caldercruix-Coatbridge), 213 (Petersburn-Glasgow), 215 (Coatbridge-kirkwood), 217 (Coatbridge-Kirkshaws), 226 (Hillhouse-Fairhill), 228 (High Earnock-Coatshill), 240 (Carlisle-Glasgow), 241 (Eddlewood-Glasgow), 255 (Motherwell-Glasgow), 256 (Shotts-Hairmyres Hospital), 260 (Petersburn-Glasgow), 263/264 (Little Earnock-Glasgow), 267 (West Crindley-Glasgow), 291 (Newarthill-Motherwell), 293 (North Motherwell-Motherwell), X1 (Hillhouse-Glasgow express), X43 (Motherwell-Glasgow express), 840 (Glasgow-Motherwell night service), 860 (Glasgow-Airdrie night service), and 862 (Glasgow-Motherwell night service).

First Lowland

1101/2/4/6/7 (H701/2/4/6/7 GVM) are Northern Counties H45/32F-bodied Volvo Citybus B10M-50s which were obtained in August from First Manchester where they were numbered 7001/2/4/6/7. They entered service from Dalkeith depot still in Manchester livery on school duties, but are also used on morning and evening peak journeys.

Another recent arrival is 188 (G56 RND), a Leyland Tiger TRBL10/3ARZA with Alexander (Belfast) N-type B55F body previously numbered 406 in the First Northampton fleet. It has been repainted into First SMT livery in a style slightly different from that applied to its sisters in the First Midland Bluebird fleet, and put to work from Musselburgh depot.

First Midland Bluebird

Leyland Tiger 198 has been repainted into First SMT livery.

First Stop, Renfrew

Northern Counties-bodied Dodge S56 C831 CBU has been sold to PD Travel, Dumbarton.

Galson, Barvas

GS46 (R50 GMS) is a Ford Transit minibus which was new in August last year, but not reported until now. Subsequent additions comprise GS47/8 (A112/3 TRP), Plaxton C50F-bodied Leyland Tiger TRCL11/3RHS which arrived in April ex-United Counties 112/3; and GS49 (L167 PKU), a Ford Transit with AVB 15-seat body purchased by August ex-A1, Methilhill. GS47/8 had been re-registered SAZ 3952 and TAZ 3608 respectively by August.

Goosecroft, Denny

Hourly Monday to Friday service 171 (Falkirk/Dunipace circular) was registered from 30 September.

Green Line, Paisley

E209 XWG is a Reeve Burgess B25F-bodied Renault S56 added to the fleet recently, having previously been Mainline 209. MCW Metrorider F116 YWO has gone to Puma, Glasgow.

Hall, Kennoway

Roe H43/31F-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68C/1R WAG 376X was purchased in August from Sharp (preservationist), Busby but was previously LA550 in the First Glasgow fleet, and E346 WYS is a Renault S56 with Alexander B25F body last owned by Spencer, Leven

Henderson, Hamilton

Following the award of an additional contract from SPT, subsidised service 395 (Uplawmoor-Eastwood Toll) was extended from 18 October to operate between Uplawmoor and Eaglesham via Eastwood Toll and Newton Mearns. The commercial Saturday variant 396 (Uplawmoor-Newton Mearns via Barrhead and Crookfur) was withdrawn at that time. Dormobile-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D K657 NGB has passed to Milne, Macduff.

Highland Bus & Coach RN

Former Dunnet, Keiss Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Fleetline DWH 696W is now reported to be in cream and red fleet livery. As reported below, Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards L213 (GSO 78V), L833 (ULS 333T), and L893 (YSF 103S) have been transferred to Highland Country.

Highland Country RN

The first effect of new ownership for this company may come in the report that Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards L213 (GSO 78V), L833 (ULS 333T), and L893 (YSF 103S) have been transferred in from the Highland Bus & Coach fleet and put to work at Aviemore or Fort William depots in an unrelieved all-over dark blue livery.

Irvine, Law

As reported above, this company is again running the service between Wishaw and Law, commercially during the main part of the day and under short-term SPT subsidy in the evenings as service 348. The subsidised Sunday service contract has been won by White Ribbon, East Kilbride (qv).

Kineil, Fraserburgh

From 18 August one return journey has been provided on Mondays to Fridays on service 271 between Fraserburgh and Banff.

Kinnaird, Tranent

An unusual minibus joined this fleet in May in the form of KX1 7804, a Mercedes-Benz 609D with Ulsterbus 19F body, having previously been Ulsterbus 804.

Kirkpatrick, Banchory

Duple-bodied Volvo 901 finally entered service with this operator in late-August having been loaned back to its previous owner, Mairs Coaches, since acquisition in July. It now carries Kirkpatrick of Deeside fleetnames on its ivory livery.

With the start of the new school term in August most of the Kirkpatrick fleet was transferred back to Banchory at that time. A small number of coaches are, however, still based at Aberdeen.

Lothian

Alexander H45/30D-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A 1R 602 (OSC 602V), withdrawn from service at the end of last year with others of its batch, reappeared in use at the end of August.

Lippen, Johnstone

From 3 August this company has provided the peakhour service between Linwood and Cowglen Savings Bank previously provided by Premier Travel, Renfrew, that company having closed down.

McCall, Lockerbie

An interesting development, presumably as a result of the Rural Transport Fund, was the introduction from 31 October of a long-lost link between Moffat and Galashiels via St Mary's Loch and Selkirk. One time service 390 of SMT, this new facility provides two return journeys on Saturdays. Another contract has been won to provide one early morning Monday to Friday journey between Lockerbie and Dumfries. Crichton.

McColl, Balloch

MCW-bodied Leyland Fleetline WDA 930T has been sold to Carlton, Glasgow.

MacEwan, Amisfield

It is reported that the former Carruthers, New Abbey two-tone brown and yellow livery, now branded as Dumfries & District colours, is carried by Bristol LHS LFJ 848W and Leyland Leopards TSJ 77S, AHN 391T, PGA 833V, LPY 458W, and FIL 4033.

McGill, Barrhead

As recorded above, operation of service 4 between Paisley and Neilston passed to Arriva Scotland West from 14 September.

McKindless, Wishaw

This operator has replaced First Glasgow services between Wishaw and Cleland on a commercial basis.

Mackie, Alloa

G145 BLD is a Volvo B10M-46 with Plaxton C43F coachwork acquired in April ex-Capital, West Drayton and L6 LJA is a Volvo B10M-62 with Jonckheere C55F coachwork obtained in August from Allison, Dunfermline in exchange for Leyland Lynx saloons D634 BBV and D122 FLS. Another Lynx, D107 NDW, was sold to AD Coach Sales (dealer), Wetheridge in April.

Mairs, Aberdeen

The loan of Kirkpatrick Duple-bodied Volvo 901 (GSU 390, E407 RWR) ended in late August. Dennis Javelin 740 was reseated from C35F to C29F plus tables in July last year.



Marbill, Beith

Wadham Stringer-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D Dial a Bus L851 WDS has been sold to Avondale, Greenock.

Midland, Auchterarder

S657 ASX is a Mercedes-Benz O.810 with Plaxton C31F bodywork which was new in September, and K993 OHS is a Volvo B10M-60 with Van Hool C53F coachwork acquired in August ex-MacPhail, Newarthill. Plaxton C25F bodied Mercedes-Benz 711D L6 DMC passed to Toolan, Glenrothes in September.

Milne, Macduff

Several buses were added to this fleet in August in the shape of East Lancs H48/36F-bodied Ailsa B55-10S OSN 872Y, A80 SSP ex-Travel Dundee 72, 80, and Dormobile B29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D K657 NGB ex-Henderson, Hamilton.

Mitchell, Plean

S8 BUS is a Caetano C26F-bodied Toyota BB50R which was new in August. BVR 62T is a Leyland Fleetline FE30AGR with Northern Counties H43/32F bodywork acquired from Prentice, West Calder in August.

Moffat & Williamson, Gauldry

From 28 September one return journey has been provided on Mondays to Fridays on service 47 (Glenrothes bus station-Star).

Orion, Wemyss Bay

E204 PWY is another Optare StarRider DP28F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D which has been added to the fleet recently.

Owen, Chapelhall

The Glasgow-Edinburgh service has now been increased in frequency to half-hourly, and additional vehicles have been purchased from Stagecoach companies to assist with this extra work. L266 VUS, a Scania K113CRB with Van Hool C53F coachwork owned latterly but not used by Western Buses after being acquired with the Glasgow-Ardrossan service of Crawford, Neilston; and UOT 648, XRC 487 are Volvo B10M-61s with Van Hool C53F and C49FT coachwork previously numbered 558/60 in the Bluebird Buses fleet.

Paterson, Kilbirnie

Having previously been on hire, Alexander (Belfast) B53F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3C/3R EGB 51T was purchased from Blue Bus, Horwich at the end of June. Van Hool-bodied Volvo B10M-61 TIB 4022 (FGB 740X) has been repainted all-over white with blue fleetnames in lieu of the old brown coach livery.

PD Travel, Dumbarton

C831 CBU is a Northern Counties B18F-bodied Dodge S56, previously with First Stop, Renfrew. Another Clydebank/Glasgow service registered from 28 September was 11X (Mountblow-Gartnavel Hospital or Sauchiehall Street), operating hourly on Mondays to Saturdays in competition with First Glasgow service 11.

Pegasus, Perth

Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tiger 5796 MX was re-registered RBZ 5493 in July and is now C51F ex-C48F. Plaxton-bodied Leyland Leopards 03 (FIL 7663, YWL 134K) and 06 (FIL 7661, AUD 310J) were both sold in May to the Oxford Bus Museum Trust for preservation.

Group codes

AA	Arriva Passenger Services
FG	FirstGroup
NX	National Express Group
RN	Rapsos
ST	Stagecoach
YT	Yorkshire Traction

An unusual bus to carry First Midland Bluebird livery is 194 (A669 KUM), an ex-Yorkshire Rider Duplex Dominant-bodied Leyland Tiger.
RICHARD WALTER

Prentice, West Calder

VFT 188T and YNL 232V, Leyland Atlantean AN58A/2Rs with MCW H49/37F bodywork previously Sunderland & District 3688 and 3732, joined this fleet in August. Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Fleetline BVR 62T was sold to Mitchell, Pleat at that time, and Duple-bodied Volvo B58-56 JUT 313V passed to McKendry, Loanhead in July.

Puma, Glasgow

F116 YWO is a DP23F-bodied MCW Metrorider MF150/103 previously with Green Line, Paisley which has been given fleetnumber 116. PMT-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709D G211 NLG has been re-registered CLZ 3035.

Alexander-bodied Dodge S56s D248/54 NCS and D301 SDS were all sold some time ago but not reported until now.

Rapson, Brora

Alexander-bodied Seddon Pennine DSD 983V is now B60F ex-B53F, while another example of this type, DSD 974V, is the regular performer on the subsidised service between Thurso and Bettyhill.

Rennie, Dunfermline

Re-registrations in July and August comprise those of Berkhof-bodied Volvo B10M-61 GBZ 3363 (B552 EGG, WLT 546, B188 CGA) to B958 MFS; Duple 425 E454 CGM to GBZ 3363; Duple 425 E451 CGM to NXX 451; and Plaxton-bodied DAF SB2300 439 BUS (C461 JCP) to A76 LLS. Ikarus-bodied Volvo B10M-61 NXX 451 (F418 LNL) has also been re-registered but its new mark is not yet known.

Robertson, Cuminestown

An interesting vehicle in this fleet is F121 HGD (89-G-5490, F121 HGD), an Optare StarRider C29F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811D acquired in August ex-Classic, Annfield Plain.

Rowe, Muirkirk

This company has returned to operating in the Glespin-Lanark corridor after an absence of several years, as a result of winning a short-term SPT contract to replace certain journeys withdrawn by Stokes, Carstairs because of a driver shortage.

Shiel, Acharacle

Two new services registered from late September operate between Drimnin Pier and Fort William via the Corran Ferry, providing one return trip on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays; and between Acharacle and Fort William via Lochailort, providing one return trip on Sunday afternoons. Rural Transport Fund monies have presumably brought these improvements about.

Nicoll of Laurencekirk is running this new Plaxton-bodied Mercedes Vario on the 'Howe O'Mearns' link to Stonehaven.
D. BAILEY

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

J. Anderson, Arriva Scotland West, T. Baxendale, Bluebird Buses, A. Bramhall, R. Clark, R. Crossan, M. Currie, J. Dunne, D. Gordon, S. Hulse, First Lowland, A. Macdonald, M. Morrison, G. Munro, B. Nicol, PSV Circle, Shuttle Buses, H. Simpson, J. Sinclair, Stagecoach Glasgow, W. Taylor, R. Walter, Western Buses, Western Enthusiasts Club, and Wright's have contributed items for inclusion this month and their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

Shuttle Buses, Kilwinning

Two vehicles added to the fleet in August were Northern Counties H46/38F-bodied Ailsa B55-10 OSN 860Y, last owned by Mersey Pride, Liverpool but previously Travel Dundee 60; and Carlyle B20F-bodied Ford Transit C89 AUB previously with First Choice, Peterborough.

East Lancs CH47/31F-bodied Leyland Olympian ONTL11/2RH HIL 3188 (D888 YHG) has been sold to Eastville Coaches, Bristol.

Silver Coach Lines, Edinburgh

Setra S250 coaches R847/5/6 FSX were re-registered PSU 615-7 in June or September (R846 FSX).

Stagecoach Glasgow ST

Alexander ALX200-bodied Volvo B6LE 377 (P377 DSA) was transferred to Bluebird Buses in August.

Stuart, Carlisle

OSC 50V is another Alexander H44/35F-bodied Ailsa B55-10s acquired recently from Fife Scottish, where it was numbered 50.

Travel Dundee NX

East Lancs-bodied Ailsas 72 (OSN 872Y) and 80 (A80 SSP) were sold to Milne, Macduff in August.

Watermill, Fraserburgh

This company has obtained the contracts to run journeys on various local bus services on behalf of Aberdeenshire Council, comprising 260 (Peterhead-Hatton, evening peak journeys on Mondays to Fridays); 267/268 (Fraserburgh-Mintlaw, one late evening journey on Mondays to Saturdays); 269 (Peterhead-Fraserburgh, two Sunday evening journeys); 270 (Fraserburgh-New Pitsligo, up to 12 journeys per day on Mondays to Saturdays); 274 (Fraserburgh-Rosehearty, hourly on Monday to Saturday evenings and five journeys on Sundays); 266 (Peterhead-Mintlaw-Stuartfield, various journeys on Monday to Sunday evenings); Mintlaw-New Deer, up to five journeys on Mondays to Fridays and Sundays; and Ellon-Cruden Bay, one return journey on Thursday mornings. Most started from 28 August but the latter commenced on 17 September.

Weir, Clydebank

Alexander B53F-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3D/4R TSJ 79S, previously Western Buses 679, has been purchased.

Western ST

More Alexander B23F-bodied Mercedes-Benz 709Ds arrived from Bluebird Buses in August comprising 074-9 (G277/8/82/7790/1 TSL) which were numbered 277/8/82/7790/1 by their previous owner. A further four vehicles of this type due to arrive from Bluebird Buses by the beginning of September were G260-2/70 TSL, numbered 260-270 in the latter fleet, but Western fleetnumbers were not available at the time of writing. Similar 068/72, received in July, have been allocated to Arran.

Volvo Olympian 925 has been given a black-based advertising livery for West FM96.7 radio with corporate colours on the front and its entrance doors now red. Leyland Titan 980 has lost its London red in favour of an overall advertising livery for West Sound Radio, albeit also with corporate colours on the front. Two rear end adverts to record are those on Mercedes-Benz 709D 026 for Pavilion Bowling, Saltcoats (blue) and Scania N112 453 for Fraser's Garden Centre, Dundonald (green).

Volvo B10M saloon 518 has been various given 'Airbus-4' logos incorporating an aircraft tail fin motif to promote an initiative which commenced on 29 July whereby airline passengers with valid tickets can travel between Prestwick Airport and points on service 4 (Glasgow-Ayr) for 50p. Service 4 has been diverted to operate via the airport's terminal building as part of the scheme, rather than stopping on the main road outside the airport.

Leyland Titans 976/8 are now in corporate colours, as is open top example 972 which has horizontal stripes and 'The Arran Open Top Experience' lettering. The arrival of the latter bus on Arran caused some consternation when it was realised that it was too tall to enter Brodick depot; unlike the DMS Fleetline previously used, which has a reduced height upper-deck windscreens, the Titan retains its original upper-deck windscreens and front dome and therefore remains 14ft 4in high.

August disposals to record comprise Carlyle-bodied Mercedes-Benz 811Ds 085/90/1 (H107/1/8 HDV) to Fife Scottish; MCW Metroriders 237 (E645 KYW), 241 (F119 YVP), 288 (F65 RFS) to Houston Ramm (dealer); Sudden; former AA Motors Jonckheere TransCity-bodied Scania K92CRB 450 (C351 SVV, MIL 4693, C351 SVV) to PIK, Prestwick Airport for airside duties; Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopard 679 (TSJ 79S) to Weir, Clydebanks; and Leyland Nationals 757 (RRM 383X), 758 (SHH 393X), 771/88 (WAS 771/68V), 774 (YFS 304W), 779 (RFS 579V), 781 (MSO 18W), 785 (NLS 985W) to Stagecoach Midland Red together with Park Royal-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68A/1R 810 (UNA 824S) and former A1 Service Alexander-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68B/1R 819 (KSD 62W); and Alexander open-top-bodied Daimler Fleetline CRG6LX 835 (HDS 566H, 703 DYB, SMS 402H) to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet. Van Hool-bodied Scania K113CRB L266 VUS, acquired from Crawford, Neilston but not used, has passed to Owen, Chapelhall.

Notable amongst service changes on 17 August were the diversion of AA Motors service 14 (Ayr-Muirhead) via Heathfield Road, Adamton Road and Shawfarm rather than Main Street and Prestwick Cross; the withdrawal of former Clyde Coast service 33 (Saltcoats-Beith); the diversion via West Kilbride of alternate journeys on Mondays to Saturdays, and all journeys on Sundays, on 585 (Ayr-Greenock Clyde Coaster); the replacement of A23 and A25 by new service A25 (Kincaidston-Dalmilling); and the withdrawal of A7 (Overmills-Heathfield).

This company has won the short-term SPT contract to provide a replacement facility for the Wilson, Carnwath service 30 (Leadhills-Lanark) from 14 September while tenders are being invited for a substantive contract for an enhanced level of service.

Whitelaw, Stonehouse

This operator has replaced all First Glasgow services between Hamilton and Larkhall on a commercial basis, with the Coalburn, Netherburn and Stonehouse services now providing a 10min co-ordinated frequency on this corridor during the main part of the day. From 18 October certain journeys on the Lanark-Glespin and Lanark-Lesmahagow routes have been operated by this company under contract to SPT.

White Ribbon, East Kilbride

A further SPT contracted local service which began on 14 September was 5B/5C (East Kilbride railway station-Castlemiln). It operates every half hour on Mondays to Saturdays. More short-term SPT contracts for First Glasgow replacements which commenced two weeks later were for services 223 (Hamilton-Hillhouse), 348 (Wishaw-Law-Carlisle, Sundays), and 391 (Newarthill-Motherwell).

Wilson, Carnwath

The registrations for the Maryhill/Bearsden-Kirkintilloch, Cumbernauld-Motherwell, and Lanark-Leadhills services, all of which were subsidised by SPT until earlier this year, were cancelled with effect from 14 September.

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IRISH MAJOR

Citybus

The Translink management team inspected the latest Volvo B10BLE demonstrator, S376 MVP, on 24 August. It has Alexander ALX300 44-seat bodywork with approval for 29 standing passengers. It was used on Citybus route 87 from 3 September, and moved to Ulsterbus on 15 September. During the test period it carried fleetnumber 2015.

Volvo B10M/Van Hool artic 3000 (DAZ 3000) has been returned to service on the CityExpress route after modifications which have included the removal of the rear axle steering.

Bristol REll 2482 (XOI 2482) has been delicensed and placed in reserve, while Leyland Tiger 2608 (LXI 6608) is off the road for accident repairs. As usual several buses were delicensed during the summer school holidays and were reinstated in September.

Ulsterbus

Vehicles returned to service from reserve are Leyland Leopard/Alexander 116 (ROI 116) and Bristol REll/Alexander 2433/56 (WOI 2433/56) while similar 2473 (WOI 8473) is reinstated at Antrim on a temporary basis from Citybus reserve. Leopard/Alexander 227 (WOI 2227) has also returned to service after accident repairs.

Volvo B10M/Van Hool artic 3001 (DAZ 3001) has returned to Larne following loan to Londonderry over the summer. It has had its rear steering removed.

Volvo B10BLE/Alexander ALX300 demonstrator S376 WVP (see Citybus) was tested by Ulsterbus at Larne for a week and returned to Volvo on 22 September.

Leyland Leopard/Alexander 109 (ROI 109) has been re-registered WAZ 5652, following the release of its registration number to an outside buyer. Ulsterbus does not normally release numbers until vehicles are withdrawn, so this is a rather exceptional move and is unlikely to be repeated.

Leyland Leopard/Plaxton Express coach 557 (WOI 2257) has passed to Beatties of Hillsborough for scrapping.

A most unusual addition to the Flexibus fleet is Wright Contour-bodied Leyland Tiger coach 541 (EXI 5541) from the Ulsterbus reserve fleet to operate a contract. Two former Ulsterbus BusyBus Mercedes 609D van conversions have also been taken into the Flexibus fleet; they are 810/6 (LXI 6810, NXI 816).

Above:
This unusual overall advertisement for Guinness has been applied to Bus Eireann DAF SB220/Alexander DA2 (93 C 2502) at Cork.
CHRISTINA CURTIS

Right:
Used on what is reckoned to be the world's only ghost bus tour is this ghoulish Dublin Bus Leyland Atlantean, DF450 (450 DZ). This was until recently an open topper but has had its roof replaced.

JOHN G. LIDSTONE

Dublin Bus

As this year's deliveries of Alexander (Belfast)-bodied Volvo Olympians reaches completion, it is announced that a further 110 similar vehicles have been ordered for next year. Clontarf has now received its final allocation of Olympians for 1998 with delivery of a further 10 buses, RV422-31 (98 D 20422-31) which have entered service on a variety of routes. The remaining buses for 1998 will be received by Summerhill and Donnybrook, with delivery due to be completed during October.

As a result of these deliveries Clontarf has withdrawn GAC single-deckers KC40-3/7, 77 (ZSI 40-3/7, KZG 77) and Bombardier KD12 (12 JZL), while KD9 has been transferred to Donnybrook to replace similar KD268 (268 OZU) which has been withdrawn there. Meanwhile Summerhill has withdrawn KD86 (86 JZL) in anticipation of delivery of new Olympians. Clontarf also suffered a serious vandalism casualty with Olympian RA268, which was badly damaged by fire, though it will be repaired.

Phibsborough's Bombardiers KD134/7/8/61/99, 203 returned to service in September with the resumption of schools.

Conyngham Road's Olympian RH81 has gained the new blue and cream livery, having been in white wedding hire livery since new in 1991.

Dublin City Tours has added the Dublin Ghost Bus Tour using newly re-roofed Leyland Atlantean PDR1A/1 DF450 (450 DZ) featuring Dracula's Dublin origins (author Bram Stoker) and attending an Irish wake. The fare is £15, with 19.00 departures five nights a week, and this is reckoned to be the only ghost tour in the world!



Bus Eireann

Following the delivery of VP71-80, Plaxton Premiere C49Ft-bodied Volvo B10M coaches, VP21/3-8, 31-5 (96 D 42527/196/1/09/5/1, 42493/0/87/5/78) have followed VP22/9, 30 back to Yeates, Loughborough, at the end of their lease. They all went back after three days' service to augment the fleet during the visit of US President Bill Clinton. VP32 had already been returned following fire damage at Sligo last year.

A rather remarkable recipient of allover advertising is the oldest remaining KC citybus, KC5 which, along with DAF SB220/Alexander DA1 at Cork, advertises Guinness. Seven Up advertising has also been applied to a KC at Cork, KC163, along with DAF DA2.

Bombardier KD184 (184 JZL) remains at Cork as the sole surviving double-decker. Galway's GAC rural buses KR61, 71 have reverted to fleet livery, ex-Coca Cola and Irish Kidney Donor Association advertising.

Volvo coaches transferred from Broadstone are Caetano-bodied VC86 to Sligo and VC118 to Ballina, and Plaxton-bodied VP54/5 to Stranorlar and VP60 to Sligo. Also transferred are VP53 from Tralee to Broadstone, VP58/9 from Waterford to Cork, VP61/2 from Dundalk to Stranorlar and VP70 from Tralee to Cork.

Bedford/Van Hool schoolbus SS797 is now a driver trainer at Sligo and Ballina.

IRISH INDEPENDENTS

Chambers, Moneymore

New additions are WIW 2639/41, Mercedes-Benz O 814 Varios with Eurocoach C19F (2639) or C24F (2641) bodies. A smaller addition is WIW 2640, a Mercedes-Benz 412D Sprinter, also with Eurocoach bodywork, this time C18F.

J. J. Kavanagh, Urlingford

This operator has started a local town service in Maas, Co Kildare, now very much a developed dormitory town within 20 miles of Dublin. It uses an Ailsa, 83 KE 269 in a white Rapid Express livery and is believed to be ex-Travel Dundee. Two further buses, ex-Merseypride former Greater Manchester Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Atlanteans ANA 625/47Y are likely to join the service.



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Keneally, Waterford

This operator also has two former Travel Dundee Ailsas. They are B55-10s with Northern Counties H48/36F bodies, latterly Travel Dundee 53/4 (OSN 853/4Y) and have been registered 83 WD 463, 289 respectively.

Kilkenny Medieval Tours

Open-top Bristol VRT/ECW 77 KK 524 used on the Kilkenny city tour, was previously CBV 19S. New to Ribble as its 2019, it was latterly with Hydes, Tilworth.

Logan, Dunloy

Recently acquired from Biss, Stansted, was AKZ 4667 (A225 WEV, 125 JUP, A118 SNH), a Mercedes-Benz O.303 with Jonckheere C51F body.

Londonderry & Lough Swilly

Placed in service at the start of September were Alexander-bodied Leyland Leopards 406/7/10-3 (BSJ 891T, GCS 59V, BSJ 921/2/14/8T) which have been re-registered 79 DL 642, 80 DL 711. 79 DL 841/0/4/3 respectively. Also now in service is Leyland Tiger/Plaxton 409 (WLT 924, A172 UGB), which is now 84 DL 2188.

Ex-Arriva Tees & District Plaxton-bodied Leyland Tigers REP 328Y, A105/20 EPA have been allocated fleetnumbers 416/4/5 respectively. First into service is 416, which is now registered 83 DL 1560.

The last BET-style Leyland Leopards were taken out of service at the end of last June, when Marshall-bodied 320/7 (73 DL 32/6, JHA 240/14L) were withdrawn. This type first entered the fleet back in 1977 and for many years formed the backbone of the fleet. Another type nearing extinction is the former Ulsterbus Leyland Leopard/Alexander. Only two remained in early September, 301 (73 DL 1, DOI 1538) and 323 (72 DL 39, DOI 1568), which are retained as spare buses. These are also the only active members of the fleet in red and cream livery.

Group codes

AA	Arriva Passenger Services
BL	Blazefield Holdings
EY	EYMS Group
FB	First Bus
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MT	MTL Holdings
NX	National Express
ST	Stagecoach Holdings
YT	Yorkshire Traction

Santa Fe International

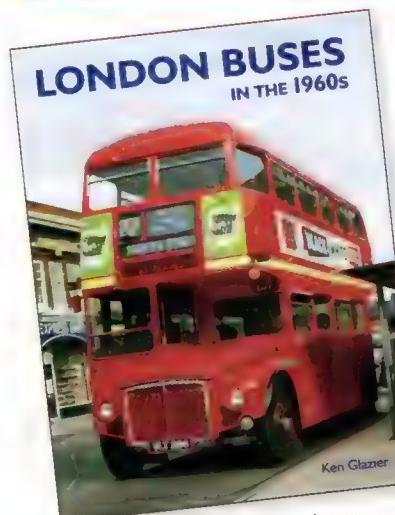
This operator is the owner of Leyland Leopard/Plaxton IBZ 1672 (PNB 807W), and not North Down Coach Hire, Bangor, as previously reported.

Shoreline, Kilkeel

An unusual addition to this fleet is 951 SAU (A103 MW7), a Neoplan Skyliner 77-seat double-deck coach, latterly with Prentice Westwood, West Calder.

*Left:
The sixth of Dublin
Bus's Alexander
Ultra-bodied Volvo
B10Ls, VL6
(98 D 2006) is
powered by
compressed natural
gas and carries a
suitable livery.*

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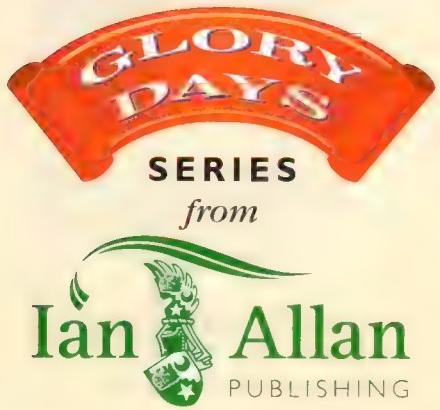
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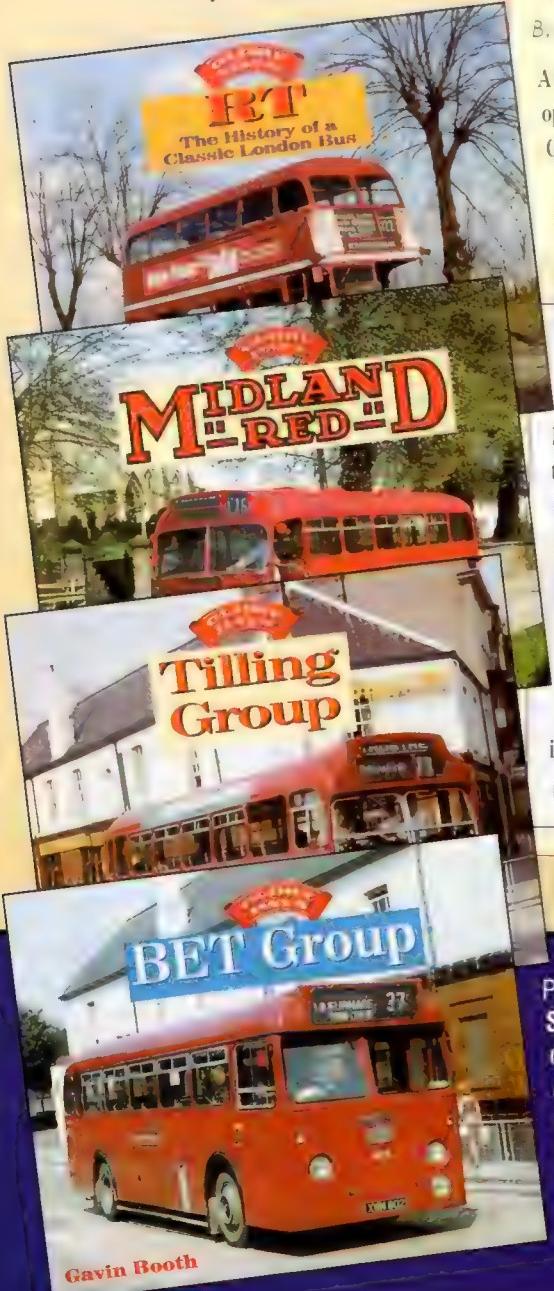
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'Christmas Gift Time Once Again. Here Are Just A Few Of The 660 Programmes Which Feature In Our Full List'

651. Staffordshire, UK Buses Sept 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer visiting Hanley, Stafford, Rugeley, Burton & Stoke. Introduction of buses in corporate First Group livery and Midland Red Arriva livery.

662. Glasgow, UK Buses Sept. 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes filmed by Dave Spencer in bright conditions. Mainly First Group Red livery plus Stagecoach and Arriva, also scenes at Hamilton bus station.

661. Edinburgh, UK Buses Sept. 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer including introduction and corporate First Group livery, open top services. All operators as seen in bright diffused light.

660. Sussex, UK Buses August 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer starts with Eastbourne for new Spectras then on to Brighton and Hove, Worthing and Lewes plus open top services in Eastbourne on Bank Holiday Monday.

659. East Anglia, UK Buses August 1998 (Dig). Filmed by Dave Spencer in August 1998 we start our journey amongst the friendly bus crews of Norwich, then move to Gt. Yarmouth and Lowestoft where thunderstorms beckon us back to the car and on to terminate in Ipswich safely back in sunshine.

658. Merseyside, UK Buses July/August 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer starts in Liverpool city centre in bright sunshine (rare in 1998!) then on to St. Helens and finishes at Birkenhead in the rain.

657. Yorkshire, UK Buses August 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer on a bright summers day, we visit Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield Mainline now Firstbus Group.

652. Czech Rep. Trams & Trolleybuses July/Aug 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer with scenes in Pilsen, Ceske Budejovice and Martanske Lazne also plenty of scenic views to set the subjects in context.



647. France/Germany, Trams/Trolleybuses July 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer starts in Nancy with Buses and Trolleybuses then to Strasbourg which includes 'just' opened extension to the futuristic tramway then to the Saarbrucken system. A new tram system which runs across the border from Germany into France.

645. West Midlands, UK Buses July 1998 (Dig). This 60 minute programme takes us to Birmingham and Coventry with bright weather illuminating the buses at Coventry bus station and Birmingham city centre.

644. Blackpool, UK Trams July 1998 (Dig). This 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer and Rob Hatch covers the build up and Day Of The Tram centenary cavalcade including trials of rebuilt car 707 and despite high winds and rain, the formation of the cavalcade and run to Fleetwood.

643. London, UK Buses July 1998 (Dig). The

PMP TRANSPORT VIDEOS

main features of this programme are Edgware, Golders Green and Kingston upon Thames. Introduction of Arriva livery.

642. The Shires (Arriva), UK Buses June/July 1998 (Dig). 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starting in Hemel Hempstead then on to Luton and finishing at Watford. Introduction of Arriva livery just started.

641. North Weald, UK Bus Rally June 1998 (Dig). 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer includes rally entrants passing by the rally site and scenes on the show ground later in the day.

640. Lincolnshire, UK Buses June 1998 (Dig).

60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starting in Scunthorpe then on the Grimsby and finishing at Lincoln.

637. Manchester, UK Buses June 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer with scenes taken at Bolton (First Manchester) new R reg buses and liveries plus Oldham (older types) and Ashton under Lyne (variety of operators).

634. South Wales, UK Buses June 1998 (Dig). A 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starting in Newport then on to Caerphilly, Blackwood, Merthyr Tydfil and Pontypridd. Developments include Stagecoach Rhondda.

631. Coaching Holiday, UK Coaches 16mm Cine. Starts with 10 minute Greenslades in house film made 1959. The next section early 1960s. BTf film about Tilling coach holidays. 20 minutes then final section National Bus Co. 1970s film about coach holiday in South West 30 minutes, not much coach content in latter.

630. North Wales, UK Buses (Dig). Filmed Nov. 97 and May '98 we start with winter scenes in Wrexham, includes Father Christmas parade!

Then Mold again end Nov. In May '98 sunshine we start at Rhyl then to Llandudno and end at Bangor. Introduction of Arriva livery in 1998 scenes.



628. South West England, UK Buses 1997-98 (Dig). A variety of locations, Tavistock, Exmouth & Barnstaple in Devon summer '97, then Camborne, Redruth, Truro and Bodmin in Cornwall spring '98 and second half covers the 1998 Poole running day in pouring rain with arrivals at the rally and free bus services.

627. Cornwall, UK Buses April 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes filmed by Dave Spencer in April 1998 with glorious spring sunshine, starting at Truro then on to Falmouth, Penzance and then Camborne/Redruth.

626. Bournemouth, UK Buses April 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes filmed by Dave Spencer in spring sunshine. After scenes around the town centre, we move on to Poole for more Wilts & Dorset views at the bus station.

624. Cyprus, Buses April 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer in scorching spring sunshine and scenes taken in Limassol, Nicosia & Paphos. Many old Bedford 'Village' buses now derelict in the countryside.

621. Gloucestershire, UK Buses March 1998 (Dig). 60 minute programme shot by Dave Spencer starting at Cheltenham and then by contrast Gloucester both with usual mix of independents and Stagecoach.

617. London, UK Buses March 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer commencing in Lewisham then on to Bexleyheath, Dartford and Bromley. Kentish bus introduction of Arriva identity.

616. N. Ireland, UK Buses Various (Part Dig). Starts with UTA promotional film from 16mm cine for coach holidays in 1960s, then Londonderry 3/98. Cultra Transport museum at Hollywood for new Road Transport display, includes trams and trolley then further Ulsterbus with depot visits 3/98.

615. Belfast, UK Buses Feb. 1998 (Dig). An hour long programme by Dave Spencer recorded in terrible weather with gales and snow. Mainly features Belfast around Donegal Square. Depot visit plus filler from Derry.

614. British Bus Journey, UK Buses An hour long journey through England and Wales mainly 1960s and 70s drawing upon the PMP archive as an introduction to the period of 'traditional' bus operations without being overwhelmed by technical detail. An ideal starter or for the casual viewer.

613. North East, UK Buses Feb. 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer with scenes taken in the rain at Sunderland then Gateshead. Includes service to Angel of the North then concludes in Newcastle.

612. Teeside, UK Buses Feb. 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer starts at Middlesbrough then Stockton. Arriva livery makes its impact plus refurbished Nationals and 2nd hand Titans for Stagecoach Transit.

608. Malta, Buses Feb. 1998 (Dig). The first of four programmes recorded by Dave Spencer in February 1998 each lasting 60 minutes with crystal clear sunlit shots. This volume also includes Gozo with ERF Islander and MAN ex demonstrators.



607. Manchester, UK Trams Jan. 1998 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer covering Metrolink with cab ride Altrincham to Victoria and then lineside at stations. Back to G-Mex and finishes at Navigation Rd.

606. Hereford & Worcester, UK Buses Jan. 1998 (Dig). 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starting at Hereford major part of video then to Worcester and late afternoon at Bromsgrove.

599. Hong Kong, China Buses Dec. 1997 (Dig). China Motor Bus and Citybus on Hong Kong Island. 60 minutes by Dave Spencer. Not a lot different even under Chinese control, all those super 3 axle British buses.

589. Preston, UK Buses Nov. 1997 (Dig). 60 minute video by Dave Spencer with lingering look at Preston and Ribble buses at the bus station and following the buses as they leave through the town centre.

586. London, UK Buses 1997 (Dig). 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starts in Oxford St. 15 minutes July then remainder at Stratford bus station and High St. in Nov. 1997.

582. Cheshire, UK Buses (Dig). Mainly shot in Oct. 1997 by Dave Spencer. Lasts 60 minutes, visits Northwich, Widnes, Chester, Congleton, Crewe, Macclesfield, Widnes and in 1996 we recall the Warrington Bus War.

580. South Devon, UK Buses Oct. 1997 (Dig). 60 minute programme by Dave Spencer starting in Exeter with frantic Friday rush hour mini bus scenes then Torquay and Plymouth with Saturday services.

576. Lathalmond, Scottish Bus Museum, Sept. 1997 Buses (Dig). Open weekend at this superb museum with all the display areas and workshops together with free bus service within the museum. Featuring also the Sunday road departures.

563. Aberdeen, UK Buses Aug. 1997 (Dig). A 60 minute presentation by Dave Spencer, wide spread First Bus livery in Grampian fleet. Lots of new stock, mainly Union St. & Station areas, includes Stagecoach Bluebird fleet.

562. Scotland, UK Buses March-Aug 1997 (Dig). 60 minute video by Dave Spencer. Starts in March at Ardrossan, Greenock & Renfrew, then some superb scenes in Dundee in August. Nice locations, friendly driver.

559. London, UK Buses July 1997 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer on Saturday 26th July at Romford with extensive coverage of all operators around the central bus routes.

553. Leicester, UK Buses July 1997 (Dig). 60 minutes by Dave Spencer with scenes at the coach station.

551. Isle of Wight, UK Buses June 1997 (Dig). Filmed by Dave Spencer with scenes in Newport, Ryde, Sandown, Shanklin & Yarmouth Southern Vectis, always a popular operator, well covered in this 60 minute video.

549. Tramway Contrasts, UK Trams (Dig). Video by Dave Spencer compares Sheffield Feb. 1996 with latest routes to Malin Bridge and Hillsborough with Blackpool and June 1997 scenes with rebuilt original Balloon car No.700 which had recently been returned to service.

542. St Etienne, France, Trams & Trolleys 1997 (Dig). Dull May weather but brightens up to display traditional and refurbished trams and new cars together with trolley fleet which includes artics duobuses in both modes. 60 minutes.

526. East Anglia, UK Buses 1.3.97 Video by Dave Spencer from digital masters visiting Norwich, Gt. Yarmouth & Ipswich.

522. Nottingham, UK Buses. 60 minutes by Dave Spencer on digital masters covering municipal buses plus Trent/Barton fleets and independents. Entry into service of 'tram livery' buses.

515. New Zealand, Buses/Trams. Dec. '96 by Dave Spencer. 60 minutes from digital masters. Christchurch tourist trams, bus services, preserved buses, depot and sceneries.

510. London, UK Buses. Edgware, Harrow, Brent Cross plus City. 60 minutes by Dave Spencer from digital masters.

496. Scotland, UK Buses 1996 (Dig). 60 minute video by Dave Spencer visiting Dunfermline, Glenrothes, Perth, East Kilbride & Paisley.

432. Trans Andes Adventure, Buses April 1996 (Dig). Video by Dave Spencer. Long distance buses, plus superb dramatic drivers eye view of Andes crossing from Chile to Argentina.

415. Southern England, UK Buses 1970s-80s. Mainly Hampshire & Sussex, NBC era, lots of Fareham, Epsom Derby day open topers, rallies.

405. Southern England, UK Buses. 1960s-80s cine from several collections from Eastern National through to Cornish Independents, Sussex, Hampshire.

326. Merseyside, North Wales, UK Buses. Cine compilation by Roy Marshall 1960s-70s with Liverpool, Wrexham, Widnes as just a few of the locations covered.

325. The Island, UK Buses/Trams. Exquisite compilation of cine taking in 1960s-70s scenes in the Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Isle of Wight steam trains.

324. Yorkshire, UK Buses 1960s-80s. High quality cine by Roy Marshall taken Rotherham, Sheffield, Dewsbury, Leeds, just some of many locations

318. Midlands/East Anglia, UK Buses 1960s-80s... Cine by Roy Marshall with large area stretching from Potteries Midlands across to East Anglia

317. North West England, UK Buses 1960s-70s. Cine by Roy Marshall covering pre SELNEC municipals and operators throughout Lancashire.

316. North East England, UK Buses 1968-80s. Cine by Roy Marshall with pre PTE liveries, independents. Tyneside, Co. Durham and Teeside.

229. Southdown, UK Buses. Cine film by John Bishop with 1970s-80s scenes recording the NBC era. Lots of Queen Mary PD3s still around.

219. Southdown Motor Services, UK Buses. All time favourite with vehicles in the 1960s in traditional livery pre NBC open topers, utilities, Guy's, Queen Marys.

115. West of England, UK Buses. 1960s-70s cine film by Robin Hannay and John Bishop covering Bristol group. Western/Southern National, Swindon & Plymouth.

106. Yorkshire, UK Trolleybuses. John Bishop cine film 1960s all colour, visiting Rotherham, Bradford, Hull and Huddersfield. Includes narration.

105. Channel Islands, Malta, Isle of Man, Buses/Trams. Cine film 1960s by Robin Hannay. Exquisite film of Guernsey, early 60s Malta, all modes in Isle of Man.

96. UK, Tram Archive. Cine film by Terry Barker from 1956 onwards covering Leeds, Liverpool, Aberdeen and Glasgow. Narrated.

67. Glasgow, UK Trams & Trolleybuses. Cine film by John Bishop and Terry Barker with views in many locations. All in colour with narration.

59. Maidstone, UK Buses & Trolleybuses. Archive cine film of buses and trolleybuses by John Bishop in Corporation days, then Boroline era on video by Dave Spencer including London operations.

41. East Kent Road Car Co. UK Buses. 1960s-70s cine by John Bishop. Exquisite film with traditional livery back to Dennis Falcons, Titans, Regents, wonderful.

38. Yorkshire, UK, Trolleybuses, Buses, Trams. Cine feature from 1960s by Robin Hannay. Many operators including Huddersfield, Sheffield, Hull, Leeds, Halifax etc.

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25203 Bristol RE CROSVILLE

Depicted in the Tilling livery as delivered to Crosville when new, this Bristol RE, EFM 179H, fleet number SRG 179, is on route M47 to Borth Cross Road. An early order is recommended for this model.



24705 Manchester MCW Atlantean LANCASTER CITY

When the Boroughs of Lancaster, Morecambe & Heysham were merged in 1974 this attractive livery of blue and white was chosen for its Public Transport vehicles, DBA 217C, fleet number 217 on route to Lancaster University Morecambe Battery, is sure to attract great attention when released.



16116 Leyland PD2 Highbridge CITY OF EXETER

The much requested livery of Exeter is the subject of this months release of the Leyland PD2. HFJ 145, fleet number 18, is on route A to Whipton. With detailed crest and carrying adverts for local businesses, this attractive PD is sure to please many collectors.



23310 AEC RF LONDON COUNTRY

The striking yellow relief colour began to replace the cream in the early "seventies" bringing a fresh image to the fleet. LYF 420, RF69, wears its new colours well as it travels on route 366 to Welwyn Garden City.



24805 Mercedes Hoppa MAIDSTONE & DISTRICT

Another vehicle to add to this very popular fleet, the Mercedes Minibus appears in the earlier green and cream livery. M206 SKE fleet number 1206 is on route 277 to Sherwood, and is sure to be in great demand.



20502DL BET AEC Regal SOUTH WALES

A sister vehicle to our original release, this deluxe version now carries an advertisement for South Wales Transport Co. on its roof sides. CTH 930, fleet number 21 is on route L6 to Morfa.



26001 AEC Ergo 4 axle Flatbed B.R.S.

Yet another delightful vehicle for the B.R.S. collector. In the very attractive livery of red, black and silver, HUB 316E, fleet number DB43 from its Leeds depot is loaded with wooden crates and cable drums. An early order is strongly advised.



19809 Daimler CVG6 SELNEC

Our second vehicle to appear in Sel nec colours was originally owned by Bolton Transport. KWH 578 is seen here in the attractive livery of Sel nec Northern. Fleet number 6598 is on route 10 to Bolton.

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